

Experts gather in Iraq for oil conference

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Representatives for Western oil companies arrived here Friday for an international conference on the future of the oil and gas market, organisers said. About 250 Arab, European and Asian experts are due to attend the conference Saturday and Sunday in Baghdad, despite the U.N. embargo imposed on Iraq when it invaded Kuwait in August 1990. Speakers scheduled at the seminar, the first to be hosted by Iraq since the 1991 Gulf war, include Oman Oil Minister Rashid al Barwani and the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) Deputy Secretary General Ramzi Salama. The gathering which will also look at production costs comes as the U.N. Security Council prepares to review on Monday the oil and trade embargo. Taha Hammoud, secretary of the Iraqi Oil Ministry, told a press conference that the seminar would also look at Iraq's future role in the world oil market once the sanctions are lifted. "The world has to be aware of the imbalance on the international market caused by Iraqi absence," he said.

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Sahaf in Doha

DOHA (AP) — Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammad Saeed Al Sahaf arrived Friday on an unexpected visit, the first by a senior Iraqi official to a Gulf Arab country which supported Kuwait during the 1990 invasion. Mr. Sahaf was received by Qatar's foreign minister, Sheikh Hamad Ben Jasim Al Thani. But there were no statements from either officials.

Dollar rallies

LONDON (AFP) — Stroog U.S. employment figures, trailing expectations that U.S. interest rates might rise, underpinned the dollar on Friday but it slipped ominously in late trading and dealers said that they expected central bank to act. In Paris dealers said that the U.S. unemployment data had not led to "a lasting rally for the dollar." A dealer at a U.S. bank there said: "The markets do not seem satisfied with the unemployment figures and the statements from U.S. officials and are now waiting for action from the authorities on interest rates." In London the dollar closed at 1.4105 marks from 1.3900 marks at the close on Thursday.

Hamas demands release of activists

GAZA CITY (AFP) — The Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas on Friday protested a Palestinian crackdown on its militants calling for their release and the return of their arms. The call in a statement came after Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat met U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and assured him of "new measures" to fight violence. "Hamas calls for the release of all innocent detainees ... and the return of weapons they bought with hard-earned money," the statement said citing two members of its armed group, Izzedine Al Qassam, held about 10 days ago. "Stop, the arrests and security measures because they are not worthy of a people who resisted with stones."

Women protest Israeli settlements

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — About 200 Israeli and Palestinian women demonstrated here Friday against the expansion of Jewish settlements and demanded the release of 30 female Palestinian prisoners held by Israel. The women, who gathered at the walls of the Old City, held banners saying "two states for two peoples" in Hebrew and Arabic. They called for the dismantling of the 144 Jewish settlements in the occupied territories and the establishment of a Palestinian state bordering in Israel. Scuffles broke out when Israeli right-wingers threw punches at them and attacked a press photographer, smashing his camera. Historian Dava Ivani from Jerusalem's Hebrew University, one of the organisers of the women's protest, said it was the first in a series of street actions aimed at countering the influence of rightwingers opposed to the peace process.

French diplomat meets Hamas leader in Gaza

AZA CITY (AFP) — A French diplomat has met a senior leader with the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas, who voiced satisfaction Friday at the group's first contact with a Western representative. "I had a one-hour meeting on Thursday with a French vice-consul from Jerusalem, Jean-Christophe Aucelle," Hamas leader Izzedine Al Faluji told AFP. The French consul said Mr. Aucelle met Mr. Faluji in his capacity as a journalist but not as a member of Hamas, which spearheads the fight against Israel and its position to Palestinian autonomy. "There was no contact with Hamas," a consular spokesman said.

King calls on Rabin to speed up peace process

By P.V. Vivekanand
 Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein has called on Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin to accelerate the implementation of the Jewish state's peace accord with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), official sources said Friday.

The sources, who preferred anonymity, said the King's call came during a meeting he had with Mr. Rabin in Aqaba Thursday evening.

The Aqaba summit came ahead of a visit to Syria and Jordan by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in a bid to advance the Syrian-Israeli and Palestinian-Israeli track of peace negotiations amid what appeared to be a breakthrough in pushing the Israel-PLO autonomy accord forward.

Mr. Rabin flew to Aqaba after meeting Mr. Christopher in Tel Aviv and his Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat announced after a meeting on Thursday that they had set a July 1

deadline for reaching agreement on Israeli withdrawal from West Bank towns in line with the September 1993 declaration of principles that led to autonomy in Gaza and Jericho in May 1994.

The source said Mr. Rabin briefed the King on his talks with Mr. Christopher and the Peres-Arafat meeting.

Mr. Rabin told reporters after returning to occupied Jerusalem that he made the trip because he hoped Mr. Christopher could contribute to "strengthening the agreement with Jordan, and all that is connected to the American obligation to erase Jordan's debts."

Israel Radio said Mr. Christopher had assured Mr. Rabin the United States would fulfill its financial commitment to Jordan.

"Naturally, with Jordan, with whom we have a peace treaty, and a system of many understandings, I thought it was deserved, to come and exchange ideas and to see how together we can work to advance the peace process," said Mr. Rabin.

Palestinian Economy Minister Ahmad Qourieh

meanwhile called Foreign Minister Ahad Karim Kabariti to inform of the Peres-Arafat agreement.

In Aqaba, the King and Mr. Rabin also reviewed "other issues related to the Christopher visit" to the Middle East and developments in the Jordanian-Israeli track after the two countries signed a peace treaty in October, the sources said.

"The King threw his weight behind the reality that something should be done quickly to break the stalemate in the peace process since time is running out," said one source.

"He emphasised that it is most essential that immediate measures be undertaken, otherwise the consequence of a breakdown in the Palestinian track would affect all of us," the source added.

According to the source, the King also called for speedier implementation of the provisions of the peace treaty between Jordan and Israel. This meant quicker moves towards concluding agreements in various sectors including trade and transport.

(Continued on page 7)

Negotiations on trade are proceeding at snail's pace as Israel is holding out against Jordanian demands for treatment of its imports to Israel in a manner that absorbs the huge disparity in the economies of the two countries.

A draft transport accord is almost complete and is awaiting some final touches, according to officials. This accord is expected to enable direct transport links between the two countries and allow the entry of vehicles from both sides to each other's territory.

Mr. Rabin agreed with the King of the necessity to speed up the negotiations on the various agreements and sign them even before the scheduled deadline of May 10, the sources said.

The Israeli prime minister flew aboard a military aircraft from Aqaba and the meetings were held at the Royal palace in the Red Sea port city.

The previously announced visit was Mr. Rabin's second to Jordan this year. He visited Amman on Jan. 12 and said after talks

(Continued on page 7)



Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat gestures as they walk past a Palestinian honour guard (AP Wirephoto)

New life is injected into self-rule talks — Christopher

GAZA CITY (Agencies) — Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) have reenergised autonomy negotiations after setting a new target date, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said here Friday.

"I am convinced that new life has been injected into negotiations," Mr. Christopher said after meeting PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat.

"Yesterday's talks have reenergised the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations and given an opportunity to move forward," the envoy told reporters at Mr. Arafat's Mediterranean seashore offices in Gaza City.

Israel agreed Thursday for the first time to discuss army redeployment outside built-up Palestinian areas on the West Bank and set a deadline of July 1 to complete the negotiations.

Securing overflight rights from Saudi Arabia would enable El Al to cut short its flight times to Asia and the Far East, including Bombay, Bangkok, Peking and Tokyo, by flying through Jordanian and Saudi airspaces.

According to the source, Israel expects El Al to start using Saudi airspace in summer, perhaps as early as April-May.

Saudi Arabia has not publicly commented on the negotiations with Israel, but is believed to be hesitant to allow overflight rights to the Jewish state before substantial progress is made in the Syrian-Israeli track of peace talks.

Meanwhile, informed sources said Israel and Saudi Arabia were discussing the use of Saudi airspace by Israel's El Al airlines. "The talks are in advanced stages and Israel expects an agreement with Saudi Arabia soon," said one source.

The corridor has been approved by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), El Al officials said. Air controllers of Jordan and Israel opened a direct link on Thursday.

No such "corridors" ever existed in view of the state of hostilities between Israel and the Arab states since the creation of the Jewish state.

It was not immediately known whether other airlines flying direct from European airports to Amman would use Israeli airspace or whether Israel, which maintains that high-altitude flights would interfere with its air force training flights, was ready to offer them overflight rights.

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Israel has fixed 1995 as a deadline for a breakthrough with Syria, Israeli elections are slated for November 1996 and the government says it will no longer be able to make concessions as campaigning begins.

"This is a time when important decisions will have to be taken by both countries," Mr. Christopher warned upon his arrival on Thursday.

"They must accelerate the process," the envoy added. "It is a vital time to make progress. We must revitalise this process."

Mr. Christopher, who made seven Middle East shuttle in 1994 with no real progress between Israel and Syria, flies back to Israel on Monday for follow-up talks with Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

In Syria, the ruling party newspaper Al Baath predicted that the new mission "will not produce any better results than the previous ones."

"The peace efforts will not succeed unless Israel is con-

Husseini demands talks on Jerusalem

CAIRO (AFP) — A senior Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) official called Friday for immediate talks with Israel on the future of Jerusalem instead of waiting for next year as agreed under the autonomy accords. Faisal Husseini said: "We call for the issue of Jerusalem to be placed at the top of the agenda of the current negotiations since Israel has launched a vigorous campaign to Judaize the holy city in violation of the peace accords." He was talking to journalists as he arrived in Cairo for a conference starting Sunday under the banner, "Jerusalem: The City of Peace," organised by the Arab League. Mr. Husseini, in charge of the Jerusalem file for the Palestinian self-rule authority, was accompanied by several leading Palestinian officials and experts including the Jerusalem mufti appointed by the authority, Sheikh Ekrem Sabri. "The fact that the issue of Jerusalem is to be dealt with at talks on the final status of the occupied Palestinian territories does not mean that it cannot be mentioned during the current negotiations," he said.

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man played down progress. "The meeting was positive," the PLO leader told the faithful at midday prayers in a Gaza City mosque before seeing the U.S. secretary.

However he added, "everything depends on the security measures taken by the PLO." Mr. Arafat said after meeting Mr. Christopher his forces thwarted 10 "terrorist" attacks in an effort to meet Israel's terms for progress in their peace deal.

Mr. Arafat, speaking to reporters after the 90-minute meeting, said: "We succeeded in foiling 10 terrorist attempts and we arrested them and they are in jail." "This has been coaxed to the Israelis, but nothing has been mentioned in the mass media."

Mr. Christopher said: "Chairman Arafat has assured me he has taken steps to pre-empt terror." Mr. Christopher said both sides had gained from Thursday's agreement.

"For Palestinians that means rapid implementation of the process leading to redeployment (of Israeli forces) to the West Bank," Mr. Christopher said. "Chairman Arafat has assured me he has taken steps to pre-empt terror."

Mr. Christopher said: "We have made progress on every issue and the army redeploy-

(Continued on page 7)

Agreement reached on Copenhagen statement

COPENHAGEN (Agencies) — Delegates from 184 states reached agreement Friday on the text for the final declaration on eradicating poverty that is to cap the U.N.'s first-ever summit on social development.

The document, which includes a statement of principles and a plan of action, is to be approved over the weekend by the summit, attended by 115 heads of state and government.

The final text is not binding on governments but includes a series of pledges and recommendations for action in the battle against poverty, unemployment and poor social conditions, such as child labor.

Key sticking points were a U.S.-Cuban dispute over economic embargos and differences between the United States and developing countries over clauses that stressed human and environmental rights but could have been interpreted as a brake on development of industry.

Israeli officials have said their national elections set for 1996 have made time of the essence on the Syrian track. Talks have been hamstrung for more than three years.

Syria insists Israel commit to return all of the Heights. Israel will not detail the withdrawal it foresees until Syria makes its peace with Israel.

Summit committee Chairman Juan Somavia told reporters that the draft resolution was "basically finished" with only the wording of a clause on the logistics of development still to be finalised.

He said the conference's declaration of war on poverty was a radical departure from previous approaches to the problem.

"I truly believe this is a historic commitment. We have been talking about tackling poverty — what we are saying here is that poverty should not exist," the Chilean U.N. ambassador said.

(Continued on page 7)

West Bank lawyers vote in JBA election

By Amy Anderson
 Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Voting in Jordan Bar Association (JBA) elections was uninterrupted Friday although West Bank lawyers defied an instruction from Minister of Justice Hisham Al Tal and took part in the balloting.

It was not immediately clear whether the elections would be declared null and void because of the West Bank's participation.

At least 150 of the 236 West Bank members in the 2,700-plus strong JBA had indicated their intention to vote before Friday's voting started. It was not known how many of them actually voted before polling closed at 7 p.m.

The ruling against their participation came in line with Jordan's disengagement from the West Bank in 1988 in response to a request by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), Mr. Tal said last week.

In meetings with representatives of West Bank lawyers, Mr. Tal reiterated this stand and cautioned that the elections could be illegal if they took part.

The minister relayed his instructions that West Bank lawyers be removed from the JBA roster to the JBA president, Kamal Nasser, early last week. It drew rejection from Mr. Nasser, who described it as "an interference in the bar association's affairs."

Lawyers here interpret the minister's move as an effort to curtail the association's "active" campaigning against normalisation of ties with Israel in line with the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty of Oct. 26.

They contend that a majority of lawyers and Jordanian

(Continued on page 7)

Israelis lift naval siege of Lebanon

AMERICAS talk to the Israelis and then they solve the problem.

"We thank the Americans and the Americans thank the Israelis and it is part of Mr. Christopher's mission to solve this problem (created) by Israel a few weeks ago," Mr. Hariri added.

The move was aimed at easing tension in South Lebanon during the U.S. envoy's Middle East tour aimed at pushing forward the peace process.

But one man was killed and seven injured Friday in a rocket attack on the port of Sidon, and Sarafand, the Lebanese army said.

Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, referring to the end of the blockade during U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's peace tour in the Middle East, charged Israel was playing games to divert attention from its occupation of the south.

"Nothing justified this blockade. Israel imposed it just to be able to lift it again and create the illusion of having made a concession to the United States," said Mr. Hariri.

He said the United States was being reduced to "the role of fireman instead of concentrating on the crisis of the problems."

"Israel lifted the sea blockade," Mr. Hariri told Reuters during an interview in Beirut. "I would like to thank Mr. Christopher for his efforts to have the blockade lifted."

"This is an Israeli habit, they create the problem, so we talk to the Americans, the

U.S. tells Israel, Syria it is time to make peace

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher underlined to Israel and Syria on Friday that the time to make peace lies in the "crucial" months ahead.

"Unquestionably the next few months are a crucial period," Mr. Christopher announced before taking his message to Damascus on Sunday.

Israel has fixed 1995 as a deadline for a breakthrough with Syria, Israeli elections are slated for November 1996 and the government says it will no longer be able to make concessions as campaigning begins.

"This is a time when important decisions will have to be taken by both countries," Mr. Christopher warned upon his arrival on Thursday.

Jordan plans national panel to discuss stand on NPT

By Natasha Buhkari
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan plans to form a national committee entrusted with discussing Jordan's position concerning the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) which will come under review by the United Nations in April, Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti said Friday.

Mr. Kabariti told the Jordan Times that the panel's task would be to present Jordan's position vis-a-vis the signing of the accord amid Arab division over the issue which is causing a diplomatic row between Israel and Egypt.

Jordan has not yet committed itself to a definite or an indefinite extension of the NPT pending consultations with Arab parties and the Non-Aligned Movement, Mr. Kabariti said.

The foreign minister said that Jordan, which is a signatory to the NPT, will make its final decision after consultations with the Arab League ministers expected to meet in Cairo on March 22 to be followed by consultations with the Non-Aligned Movement.

Mr. Kabariti said that the results of Jordan's consultations would be submitted to

His Majesty King Hussein for the final decision.

Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdul Maguid visited Arab countries last month for talks aimed at reaching a joint Arab stance on signing the extension of the NPT, but Arabs remained divided in their positions towards the issue, with Egypt refusing to endorse an extension of the NPT without Israel's acceptance to join the signatories.

Also, a meeting between U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Cairo Thursday failed to diffuse the Egyptian-Israeli conflict over the issue.

Reports from Cairo said that Mr. Christopher seemed to adopt Israel's point of view on the issue as he told reporters that comprehensive peace in the region is the cornerstone for increasing confidence building measures for parties involved in the Middle East peace process, thus supporting Israel's position concerning the signing of the NPT.

Israel says that it will only sign the NPT, a move considered by Tel Aviv to be a confidence building measure, when comprehensive peace in the region is attained.

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Israel says its refusal to sign the treaty is a security-related decision as the Jewish state believes that threat from regional parties can only be eliminated when a comprehensive regional peace is attained.

Arab League experts, meeting for two days last month, failed to agree on the text of a draft treaty on eliminating weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East in the hope that an Arab League draft treaty would pressure Israel into signing the NPT, which they say Israel refuses to sign for fear of having to open its installations for inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Israel has never acknowledged possessing nuclear weapons, though Western experts say it has around 200 nuclear warheads.

Jordan's October 1994 peace treaty with Israel, however, commits both sides to participate in "the creation in the Middle East of a region free from weapons of mass destruction, both conventional and non-conventional, in the context of a comprehensive, lasting and stable peace . . . thus eliminating the possibility of any row over the issue with Israel."

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No turning back from Algeria polls'

CAIRO (Agencies) — The presidential elections set for this year in trouble Algeria will go ahead, Algerian Foreign Minister Mohammad Salah Dembri pledged in an interview.

"The holding of presidential elections is a political project from which there will be no turning back and they will be held before the end of the year," he told the Saudi daily *Al Ashar Al Awat*.

The minister also said Algerian President Lamine Zeroual could meet his French counterpart Francois Mitterrand during the U.N. social development summit being held in Copenhagen.

"There is nothing preventing such a meeting now that the causes of dispute have been eliminated," Mr. Dembri said.

Franco-Algerian relations became strained last Febru-

ary when France called for a European conference on the situation in Algeria. Algerian officials condemned the call as interference in their internal affairs.

Algeria has "good relations with Paris at this stage," Mr. Dembri said.

Another Algerian minister charged that number of foreign countries were financing Algeria's outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), without naming them.

The minister-delegate in the interior ministry responsible for local authorities, Nouradine Keddi, said in Bonn that the FIS was receiving help from "certain foreign countries that Algeria helped in the past."

"With our friends, we are seeking to develop policies that will make these countries see that they are not doing themselves a favor by

financing this type of Islam which could turn against them," he added.

"There is an Islamic international which is seeking to impose new religious ideas," said the minister, who was beginning a five-day visit to Germany at the head of a delegation including the governors of the four biggest Algerian cities, Algiers, Annaba, Constantine, and Oran.

In Paris, the FIS demanded that Belgium free a top FIS official detained last week in a round-up of suspected extremists resident there.

The FIS parliamentary delegation said it was "shocked" by reporters of the arrest of Sheikh Ahmad Zouaoui "as well as other political refugees" by the Belgian authorities . . . he (Zouaoui) is one of the most important personalities in the FIS leadership.

Dr. Zogby called for more

symmetry of risk in the peace process, noting that Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian Authority are being required to take greater risks, with less political authority or economic hacking, than are Yitzhak Rabin and the Israeli government.

He noted the enormous economic and social problems in Gaza; per capita income less than half that of the West Bank and less than a tenth of that of Israel, exclusion from access to water and the best arable land, massive unemployment, lack of infrastructure and of control over borders and access. The Palestinian Authority, he pointed out, can't make concessions to the Israeli side from such a position of weakness. Only when the PA can offer to its constituents an economic and political future will it have the political strength to offer the concessions that peace negotiations require.

The Thursday session, opened by Council President George McGovern, also featured presentations by Arab-American Institute President James Zogby and Professor Ian Lustick of the University of Pennsylvania.

Both Dr. Zogby and Prof.

privately, that the final outcome of the peace process begun with the Oslo agreement will be a Palestinian state alongside Israel, and that this state will encompass all of the West Bank and Gaza with the possible exception only of East Jerusalem.

To the argument that it would be politically impossible for Mr. Rabin and his Labour government to take this position publicly, Dr. Lustick argued that in a critical situation, only the boldest measures are likely to succeed. He supported his argument by citing Charles de Gaulle's negotiations with the FLN in the early 1960s. The French president took the risk of negotiating with the resistance movement for Algeria's total independence and excluded French and French-Algerian rightists from the process entirely.

On the subject of "terrorism" and the threat it poses to the peace process, Dr. Zogby pointed out that the Hamas suicide bombers, "young men killing themselves, and killing Israelis, would choose life, families and a future if they thought that choice was open to them."

Both Dr. Zogby and Prof.

Lustick saw the issue of Israeli settlements on the West Bank and in East Jerusalem as a negation of the legitimacy of the Palestinian Authority and a major barrier to progress in the peace process. "Settlement thickening and expansion must end," said Dr. Lustick, "and public lands in the West Bank must be made available to Palestinians."

Stating the U.S. government position, Mr. Satherfield said that the question of settlements, like the other difficult questions that lay before the negotiators, must be worked out by the two sides themselves, and that it would not be productive for the United States to take a position in advance of the issue's resolution.

All three of the panel's participants agreed that the U.S. continued to have a major role to play in the peace process. Professor Lustick offered a metaphor that for the U.S. to disengage would be as impossible as for the sun to disengage from exerting its gravity on the earth. Everything the U.S. did, or chose not to do, had major repercussions in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza and surrounding nations.

Boy bomber? or pawn in PLO-Hamas rivalry?

GAZA CITY (AFP) — At 14, Musa Ziadeh is a three-year veteran of Hamas. Now he's a pawn in the rivalry between Yasser Arafat's government and the Hamas after telling police Hamas wanted him to carry out a suicide bombing in Israel.

Hamas denies trying to recruit Musa or other boys, but Palestinian officials say at least six children were in training for suicide attacks intended to derail Israeli-Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) peace talks.

"Parents in the West fear their children will turn into drug addicts. Here, we fear they will become suicide bombers," said Musa's father, Hisham, a member of Mr. Arafat's intelligence organization. He and Musa's uncle turned the boy in to police.

Musa, who joined the Hamas youth movement in 1992 in rebellion against his non-religious father, said he was drawn into the bombing plot by two clerics who approached him one evening

he was sweeping up the mosque after prayers.

"They told me since we're all mortal, it's better to die a martyr," said Musa, a delicate boy with a tanned face and brown eyes. "I thought of how I would become a hero like all the others who have martyred themselves. I told them I would do it."

Since October, 56 Israelis have been killed in suicide bombings by Hamas and the smaller Islamic Jihad.

Most of the attackers were in their late teens of early 20s.

Musa's tale has provoked another controversy between the PLO and Hamas in Gaza.

Musa says he was set for Feb. 14 and involved about seven kilograms of explosives. He says he was arrested in January before he was told the target.

Gaza psychologist Eyad Sarraj said Gaza, impoverished, chaotic and emerging from 27 years of Israeli occupation, is fertile ground for people who want to re-

cruit children to die for a cause.

"Our environment is an environment of despair," said Dr. Sarraj. "The act of dying is the ultimate act of control, when you time your own death and the death of other people."

Hamas says Palestinian police coerced Musa to make a false confession, and is demanding the release of two senior clerics arrested after Musa named them as his recruiters.

"The child is talking about an imaginary attack that has never been planned," said Emad Falouji, a Hamas spokesman. "We don't use children to carry out such missions."

Fearing for his safety, the older Ziadeh has sent Musa to stay with relatives.

Musa said he was first drawn to Hamas by the camaraderie and promises of paradise. He became a Hamas youth leader in the Bureij refugee camp, and would entice boys to attend Hamas as his was a forgery.

He acknowledged he re-

canted his confession several

times in jail after being confronted with the two clerics

— but says that was only because he felt guilty about getting them arrested.

At a news conference called by Palestinian police, he denied charges by Hamas that he confessed under duress.

During an interview at the Gaza City aluminium factory where his father works, Musa appeared confused and scared. Looking wistfully at children playing outside the factory, he said in a small voice: "I wish I could go out and live freely. But I'm scared they (Hamas) would kill me."

He and 15 other boys attended weekly religious studies at the grand mosque in Bureij. He says he and six others were chosen for special sessions in an upstairs room on how to sabotage Mr. Arafat's peace with Israel.

"They would teach us how to resist Israel's interrogation techniques and physical and psychological torture," he said.

The six others are under police surveillance, Palestinian intelligence officials said.

Musa says that when he asked whether he was too young, he was assured that in Lebanon, boys as young as 10 led guerrillas into battle.

Musa says he no longer wants to blow himself up. But he still supports Hamas and criticizes his father for urging him to leave the group.

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"We also scared them by talking to them about hell," he said. "Once they were hooked, we would move to lessons in politics."

He and 15 other boys attended weekly religious studies at the grand mosque in Bureij. He says he and six others were chosen for special sessions in an upstairs room on how to sabotage Mr. Arafat's peace with Israel.

"



Queen chairs symposium at social development summit

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor chaired a symposium entitled "Reclaiming Civil Society in the Global South" and gave the keynote address Thursday at a one-day symposium, organised by the Washington-based American University's Center for the Study of the Global South, and held at Bigtive's Pakhans in Copenhagen, during the U.N. World Summit for Social Development.

The symposium concentrated on the need to reclaim civil society in developing countries by strengthening institutional infrastructure, by supporting cooperation between governments and non-governmental institutions, and by involving the citizens of the south in the formulation and implementation of national policies.

The panels included "The Social Cohesion and Development," "The Social Responsibility of the Private Sector: Towards Elimination of Poverty and Unemployment," and "Women as a Force for Social Change and Integration."

The Queen is the chair of the advisory board of the Centre for the Study of the Global South.

Participating at the symposium were Juan Somavia, the chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the Social Summit, and Nafis Sadik, the executive director of the United Nations Population Fund, both of whom also serve as members of the advisory board of the center.

The Queen stressed the importance of empowering women and promoting universal education to raise living standards and reduce dependence.

She added that "the rising level of education of Arab women has been one of the most profound and positive forces of change in our region."

Queen Noor emphasised the important role that non-governmental organisations play in the promotion of social development.

Title "Al-Hussein" Foundation and the International Commission on Peace and Food, of which the Queen is a member, are cooperating to convene a conference on human security in the Middle East to be held in Amman to further acceleration of job creation, and regional cooperation.

Queen Noor said that "the strength of Middle Eastern culture are rooted in its powerful family structures and its tradition of social cohesion based on religious and cultural values; hence, widespread poverty and unemployment in the Middle East are not accompanied by widespread homelessness or criminal violence."

Queen Noor, accompanied by In'am Mufti, was received by Clovis Makson, the director of the center.

Among the prominent panel speakers at the symposium were Nitin Desai, undersecretary-general of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development at the UN.

Richard Butler, ambassador and permanent representative of Australia to the United Nations and Timothy Wirth, undersecretary of state for global affairs in the U.S. Department of State.

Later Thursday evening, Queen Noor met with Queen Margrethe of Denmark for a private dinner at the Royal Palace to discuss the World Summit and Queen Margrethe's upcoming visit to Jordan.

Following is the full text of Queen Noor's keynote address to the symposium.

AMBASSADOR SOMAVIA, Clovis Makson

On behalf of all of us here today, I would like to thank the government of Denmark for hosting the World Summit for Social Development, and to express our deep appreciation to Ambassador Somavia, for shepherding theious preparations which made it possible.

I also wish to express my appreciation to Dr. Clovis Makson and to my colleagues at the "Center For The Study Of The Global South" for organising this symposium. These gatherings not only promote constructive interaction among experts on issues of concern to the south as a whole, but they also allow us to inject the south's distinctive perspectives on global issues into important international forums such as the World Social Develop-



Queen Noor

economic systems.

Our people are energetic and motivated; our governments are diligent and well meaning; our sense of national identity is strong and durable; and in many cases, our natural resources are adequate. And yet, something very important is missing in many of our developing countries — an essential element that could bring all these ingredients together to generate a sustainable dynamic for human and national development.

That missing element is an engaged and functioning civil society — that rich and exciting space between the family and the state where individuals, associations, groups and institutions can interact with one another to promote their common good as well as the strength and social integration of their nation.

The promise of independence has not been fully achieved in most southern states; in recent years, the developmental process has stalled, or even collapsed in some due to a glaring lack of civil society structures, a prevalence of autocratic and often inefficient state political cultures, and unfair terms of trade and technology transfer with the industrialised world.

The absence of a meaningful and committed civil society has left a wide gulf between people and their national political and developmental processes. Citizens in most countries of the south have not been involved in making national or local decisions, nor have they played an enthusiastic or important role in implementing policies. Development, too often, has become a euphemism for government handouts to passive and impotent communities.

A dynamic civil society can promote real development by offering its members opportunities to participate in local and national activities through professional associations, special interest groups, unions and cooperatives that reflect their interests, rights and aspirations.

Governments can help by decentralising authority and responsibilities, thus enabling civil society structures to reflect, mobilise and stimulate public opinion and involvement.

Citizens and their governments need to form effective, that is, two-way, partnerships for material progress and political stability. The improvement of human and social conditions throughout the south requires a dynamic civil society empowered by democratic participatory systems. Such societies enjoy credible communication between people and their governments and can tap the full power of their human and natural resources.

Effective civil society, political inclusion and sustainable social development require the empowerment of all members of society, in particular, rural women, who are among the poorest and most vulnerable groups in the world. "More than half of the poor of the world are living in rural areas and more than half are women."

As a member of the International Steering Committee on the Economic Advancement of Rural Women, I urge all governments to do their utmost to formulate plans of action to address the specific needs of rural women and to ensure their active involvement in development.

The draft declaration of the Social Development Summit elaborates many sectoral interventions and strategies required to alleviate questions of poverty, unemployment and social marginalisation. However, as we survey the global south, it is clear that too many of these goals have little chance of fruition within existing national political and socio-

promoting universal education are the most efficient means to raise living standards and reduce dependence. Empowerment of women encourages a new regard for human rights and equitable social and political development. The empowerment of women cannot, however, be isolated from the empowerment of the entire community through more democratic, participatory decision-making. Local communities whose members are educated and self-reliant will be able to tap their own resources and dynamism to devise appropriate strategies to assure their well-being.

My own experience in Jordan with community development projects has revealed a common denominator in all of our successful projects: an integrated strategy for women's education and training, improved access for social services, involvement in the local and national economy, and greater participation in community decision-making.

The rising level of education of Arab women has been one of the most profound and positive forces of change in our region.

Gender equity and democracy are anathema in many countries, but this successful combination has often been the difference between development that tangibly improves the quality of life of each new generation of infants, and unsustainable, inconsistent progress which relies heavily on subsidies and directives from central government.

This highlights the importance of defining development in human terms, rather than merely in economic terms.

By empowering youth, women and others in society who may have been marginalised in the decision-making process, civil society transforms them and their communal structures into energetic and effective factors of development. People and institutions evolve from passive recipients of development strategies into active instruments and initiators of development momentum.

Civil society can drive development not because it raises the value-added of monetary capital, but because it enhances the value of human capital.

In the developing world today, we are also challenged to develop empowerment strategies for our younger generations, who have been raised in societies that traditionally neither sought their contributions nor valued their contributions.

We must try to instill motivating new values in our youth by promoting and enabling their active participation in the developmental momentum of their communities.

(Continued on page 7)

Arab contractors to discuss regional issues

AMMAN (Petra) — A two-day meeting for Arab contractors will be held here on April 17 to discuss the role of Arab contractors in the development and reconstruction process in the region, the President of the Jordanian Construction Contractors Association Mohammad Murad announced.

Mr. Murad said the fourth Arab Contractors Federation's Conference will discuss several working papers presented by major Arab contracting companies on contractors' role in the overall development of Arab countries, in addition to the formation of large contractors groups to carry out major contracting projects.

The conference will also discuss other important issues, including the challenges facing the contractors sector.

In a statement to the Jordanian News Agency, Petra, Mr. Murad said participants will have the chance to acquaint themselves with scientific research and establish ties with Jordanian contractors.

The conference is organised by the Arab Contractors Federation in cooperation with the Jordanian Construction Contractors Association.

Empowering women and

AMMAN (Petra) — The Mafraq Governorate Education Department is in need of 120 classrooms to meet the increasing number of schools, according to director of the first area of the department Abdul Majeed Al Ahaban.

Speaking at the conclusion of a three-day workshop organised by the Development Information Department in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund at the Mafraq Secondary Vocational School on Thursday, Mr. Al Ahaban said one third of the needed 120 classrooms will be built during 1995, noting that the department is currently establishing three schools in Bal'ama, Al Murrab and Mansabiyat Barri Hassan areas.

He said the department will also invite tenders to establish three other schools in the southern areas of Al Mafraq city, in Al Karm Wa Hmeid and in Al Dujeha.

He said there are 107 schools in the department's area, of which 52 are for male students, 17 for females and 58 are mixed. He added that 14.5 per cent of these schools are based in rented buildings.

Mr. Al Ahaban said there are 99 one-shift schools and eight two-shift schools in the area, adding that there are 85 primary education schools, teaching students up to the 10th grade.

He said the secondary school's number stands at 22, of which 10 are for male students.

One of these schools, he said, is vocational.

The department director also said that there are three private schools and two United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) schools in the governorate.

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Major arrives Tuesday for talks on bilateral ties, Mideast peace process

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — British Prime Minister John Major is due in Jordan on Tuesday on his first visit to the Kingdom as prime minister, and his talks here are expected to focus on British-Jordanian relations as well as developments in the Middle East peace process.

Also expected to be reviewed during the prime minister's visit are preparations for the Amman economic conference scheduled to be held in October.

His Majesty King Hussein, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and several members of the Cabinet are expected to hold talks with Mr. Major on bilateral relations, British assistance to Jordan and overall ties between the Kingdom and the European Union, of which Britain is a member.

Britain and Jordan have maintained traditionally close relations dating back to the founding of Jordan as an emirate in the 1920s.

King Hussein and Crown Prince Hassan are regular visitors to Britain and often meet with senior British government leaders at short notice.

Mr. Major will also visit Israel and the Palestinian territories, where he is expected to meet with Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat, who heads the Palestine National Authority (PNA) in Gaza and Jenin.



John Major

Mr. Major will be accompanied by Minister of Trade Richard Needham and a large group of British businessmen under the umbrella of the Committee for Middle East Trade.

During the delegation's stay in Amman, the committee and the Jordanian Businessmen's Association (JBA) will sign a memorandum of cooperation. The signing, scheduled to take place at the Forte Grand Hotel Tuesday evening, will be attended by Mr. Needham and his Jordanian counterpart Ali Abu Ragheh.

British diplomats describe

the business delegation accompanying Mr. Major as very strong and note that their presence here would be an excellent opportunity for Jordanian businessmen to meet contacts and exchange

British government as

businessmen in general

were taken a close interest in the Amman economic conference.

"We intend to be represented at ministerial level and (to) bring a high-powered delegation from the private sector," he was quoted as saying.

Mr. Major is looking forward to hearing Jordanian views on the prospects for the conference, the ambassador said.

Britain is among the top 10 exporters to Jordan.

has also opened a regional office in Amman. The office, which will provide data and base information to both Jordanian and British businessmen, will cover not only the Kingdom but also the Palestinian territories, Syria and Iraq.

Several British consultancy firms are involved in studies on various sectors of the Jordanian economy and resources, primarily water, as well as on the Kingdom's privatisation drive.

British Ambassador to Jordan Peter Hinchliffe was quoted in the local press as saying that Mr. Major's visit to the Middle East at this point in time was a reflection of London's keen interest in the Arab-Israeli peace process.

Noting that the British government wrote off \$75 million of Jordan's official debts last year, Ambassador Hinchliffe also said that "we are encouraging the private sector to take a close look at the opportunities in Jordan."

The envoy also said the British government, along with its partners in the European Union, was taking a close interest in the Amman economic conference.

"We intend to be represented at ministerial level and (to) bring a high-powered delegation from the private sector," he was quoted as saying.

Mr. Major is looking forward to hearing Jordanian views on the prospects for the conference, the ambassador said.

Britain is among the top 10 exporters to Jordan.

Zara-Ghor Haditha road will contribute to encouraging investments — minister

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Minister of Public Works and Housing Abdul Razzak Ensour Friday expressed hope that the Zara-Ghor Haditha road, which was opened Thursday by His Majesty King Hussein, would contribute to encouraging investments in the Jordan Valley and Wadi Araba areas.

It has become easy to access the southern areas of Jordan through the Jordan Valley after the two-phase road project was completed, Dr. Ensour told the Jordan Times in a telephone interview.

Describing the roadside view as very scenic, Dr. Ensour said the road will help encourage tourism activity in the southern parts of the Jordan Valley, noting that the area's mineral water springs and coloured mountains will play a major role in attracting tourists.

In addition, continued Dr. Ensour, the road will also

serve the national development process in the Wadi Araba and the Jordan Rift Valley and will help farmers in the two areas to transport their agricultural produce to other parts of Jordan, mainly Amman.

They will save farmers significant time and effort, and thus cut on costs.

The minister said the road can be used as a substitute for the Amman-Aqaba road in case the latter was closed for any reason.

He said work on the JD 18 million project started in 1986 and stopped in 1989 when problems arose with the coalition of Turkish and Yugoslav companies which were then carrying out the project.

Thus, he said, the need to have another phase of the project arose and a local contracting company resumed work on the 32-kilometre road project in 1992.

He said the company faced a very difficult task in opening the road in areas adjacent to the Dead Sea because of very high, rocky mountains that extend into the sea.

On Thursday at the opening ceremony, His Majesty King Hussein conferred upon the Minister of Public Works and Housing Al Kawakib Medal of the First Order which was received by Dr. Ensour.

The King also presented gifts to representatives of the local companies which worked on the project.

The opening ceremony was attended by His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah Ben Hussein, Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Royal Court Chief Marwan Qassem, Lower House of Parliament Speaker Saad Hayel Sour, the deputy prime minister, several ministers, senior government and army officials, and the Saudi Arabian charge d'affairs in

U.S. offers \$2m reward to find killers of employees Mosque explosion kills at least 11 people in Pakistan

KARACHI, Pakistan (AP) — At least 11 people — including children — were killed and more than a dozen injured Friday in a bombing and machine gun attack on a Shi'ite Muslim mosque in eastern Karachi.

After what appeared to have been a car bomb explosion, gunmen opened fire with machine guns on the wounded and people who went to their aid, said Mubarik Haider, an eyewitness.

Most of the wounded taken to Jinnah Hospital had been shot, hospital officials said.

No one took responsibility for the attack, but it was believed to be the latest eruption of sectarian violence between Sunni and Shi'ite Muslims.

The death toll was expected to rise. Among the dead were several beggars who come to mosques Friday to collect alms from worshippers. A young beggar girl known only as Selma was shot in the back as she tried to flee after the bombing, said Mr. Haider.

She was in critical condition along with dozens of other people.

At the hospital, police and paramilitary soldiers arrived to contain a growing mob. From the third and fourth floor balconies staff and patients watched the turmoil.

Some in the crowd chanted anti-American slogans and threatened to avenge the killings. It's not known whether the attack on the mosque has any links to Wednesday's killing of two U.S. government workers as they headed to

ward the U.S. consulate in Karachi. No group has been blamed for the attack.

The explosion occurred at 2:30 p.m. (0930 GMT) as prayers had concluded, said Mr. Haider.

Mosques in Karachi have been the setting for increasingly ferocious sectarian attacks that have led to dozens. Most of the dead have been worshippers.

On Feb. 25 gunmen burst into two separate Shi'ite mosques and fired on worshippers, killing at least 20.

Karachi has been wracked by bloody sectarian and tribal violence that has led to more than 400 people the past three months.

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and her government have been overwhelmed by the violence in this southern port city and have been unable to end it.

The fighting, which involved militant religious groups as well as feuding political groups, has worsened since Ms. Bhutto pulled the army off the streets at the end of November.

She said the police will be able to maintain law and order, but the killing will go on. Arrests are rare.

Ms. Bhutto has ordered a crackdown on militant Islamists and some people feel the stepped up violence is to be blamed for this crackdown.

Meanwhile the U.S. government offered a \$2 million reward Thursday for information leading to the arrest of the gunmen who

killed the two U.S. consulate employees and wounded a third.

An FBI anti-terrorism team headed toward Pakistan to help search for the men who ambushed the U.S. government vehicle.

At least two gunmen with AK-47 assault rifles sprayed a white Toyota van carrying employees to the consulate when it stopped at a red light. The gunmen then sped away in their stolen taxi.

An unidentified caller in Manila claimed responsibility for the attack on behalf of the "Liberation Army." The organization is not known in Manila and it was unclear how serious the claim was.

No arrests have been made, but police have at least one strong witness: Zulfiqar Ahmad, a taxi driver, who had his taxi stolen at gunpoint near the Karachi Airport at 6:15 a.m. Wednesday.

The taxi, found abandoned about one mile (1.5 kilometers) from the site of the attack about an hour and a half later, is believed to be the vehicle used by the assailants.

In an interview with the Associated Press, Mr. Ahmad said two young men on a motorcycle came up to him in his taxi and threatened to shoot him if he didn't give them the keys.

Mr. Ahmad turned over his keys and the two men drove off. A third man, who was standing nearby, drove away on the motorcycle.

The two men who stole the taxi appeared to be in their 20s and both had mustaches.

Mr. Ahmad described the man with the gun as strongly built and "furious looking."

Americans are seen as potential targets for a host of violence-prone elements in chaotic Karachi, including drug barons, Muslim radicals and terrorists seeking revenge for last month's extradition of the man accused of masterminding the World Trade Centre in New York.

The Washington Post, quoting an unidentified senior Clinton administration official, reported Thursday that one of the Americans killed was an intelligence agent working under the diplomatic cover.

The report did not say which victim it was, but said the U.S. government does not believe this was the motive for the slayings.

Instead, the official told the newspaper, investigators believe it was a payback for the extradition of the World Trade Centre bombing suspect, Ramzi Yousef, or was related to the ethnic violence in Karachi.

Someone claiming responsibility for the attack called the Associated Press bureau in Manila, the Philippines, Thursday morning. "We killed the Americans in Karachi. We are the Liberation Army," the unidentified voice said.

Police raided a Manila apartment in January and seized bomb-making materials. They now think Mr. Yousef had been in the apartment.

Godfather Riina gets 7 life sentence

PALERMO (R) — The mafia's captured "boss of bosses," Salvatore "the Beast" Riina, has been sentenced to life imprisonment for the seventh time, court sources said Friday.

The sentence was passed late Friday by a court in Sicily's capital Palermo where Mr. Riina, arrested in 1993 after 23 years on the run, had been on trial for four killings in the 1980s. Six other accused were also jailed for life.

All four dead were later linked to Sicilian godfather Gaetano Badalamenti, who fled abroad to escape.

He is now serving a year sentence in a U.S. for organising the "pizza nation" heroin trafficking operation between Sicily and

the United States.

Newspapers Friday quoted an American lawyer for Mr. Badalamenti, Larry Schoenbach, denying reports that his 71-year-old client was now willing to return to Italy to testify.

Mr. Riina and five other top mafiosi, all but one of them in captivity, were found guilty of all four murders and sentenced to life terms. A seventh defendant was found guilty of one of the murders and also sentenced to life.

Crime hits Russia women hardest

MOSCOW (AP) — Women are suffering disproportionately from Russia's surging crimes as rape and domestic violence soar and police remain reluctant to investigate crimes against women, human rights activists said.

About 14,500 women died as a result of domestic violence last year in Russia, said analyst Zoya Khotkina, whose research contributed to a scathing report released by Human Rights Watch-Helsinki Thursday.

No official figures for domestic violence exist, Ms. Khotkina said at a news conference, because it is not defined as a crime in Russia's criminal code.

Her estimate comes from research by sociologists and human rights groups.

The Human Rights Watch report also says police are using growing crime as an excuse not to treat women who come to them after being sexually assaulted.

The report was released the day after Russians marked International

Women's Day, to call attention to the problems gripping Russia's women.

On Wednesday, millions of people across Russia took the day off, showering women with flowers, chocolates and praise in one of the country's biggest holidays.

But the study was that Russian women have little to celebrate.

Both reported and unreported cases of rape have increased in recent years, Mr. Khotkina said, yet a number of rape prosecutions has decreased.

"This is a very disturbing tendency," she said, adding that societal pressure against reporting sexual assault against women has increased extremely strongly.

The report emphasizes that as violent crimes rise across Russia, the state is failing to take crimes against women seriously. It cites several cases of women who were ignored, harassed or threatened by police when they tried to report sexual or domestic assault.

"The law does: protect women," said Mara Pisklak,

will have something concrete to develop. It will be significant way forward."

British Geological Survey experts say the area available for exploration is 50 per cent bigger than the North Sea and the potential for striking "black gold" is very high.

While pursuing closer trade ties with Britain, Argentine President Carlos Menem has often pledged: "Before the year 2000, the Malvinas will be Argentine again."

Ambassador Pfeiffer said: "It is an Argentine aspiration."

But he stressed: "We are solemnly bound to seek the restitution of the islands exclusively by peaceful means."

Argentina was angered by Britain's decision in January to extend a fishing conservation zone around the Falklands but Mr. Pfeiffer said he thought the matter could be smoothed given the political will. "I don't think there is any insurmountable issue," he said.

He considers a joint exploration agreement would be a major breakthrough.

"That will be the first tangible, long-lasting agreement between Britain and Argentina since 1982. We

have to come to terms with the expansion of peacekeeping," said the officer, who said new military doctrine and education has been developed to help the military cope with the change.

"Let it be clear to all that the battle against the forces of anarchy and chaos has been joined. One can say they have not been warned," he said.

Mandela is getting tough on dissent

CAPE TOWN (R) — After 10 months in power, South Africa's avuncular President Nelson Mandela is showing a steely side that analysts believe will reinforce the country's post-apartheid economy.

Aides say while Mr. Mandela, 76, still takes time to greet children and shake hands with all from diplomats to deliverymen, he is becoming increasingly short-tempered and hard to please.

Economists and political analysts welcomed the emerging hard edge to the memory of those who lost their lives in the air raid, a memorial service, film shows and concerts.

"We can't stop thinking of the cruelty of the air raid as much of Tokyo was burned to ash and 100,000 invaluable lives were lost," Tokyo Governor Shunichi Suzuki told the rally.

"Today is the day to remember true misery... the air raid will be engraved in our memory forever," Tokyo Assembly Chairman Norio Okuyama said.

Thousands of relatives of the air-raid victims, Tokyo City officials and diplomats, including U.S. Ambassador Walter Mondale, attended the rally at central Hibiya Park.

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"I don't think it's just an old man getting irritable," said Stellenbosch University political scientist Willie Breytenbach told Reuters Friday.

"It's the message the businesspeople and investors need to hear... It's what ordinary South Africans are crying out for."

Black political analyst Eugene Nyati said: "His new tough line is long overdue and very correct... but he is becoming quite testy and increasingly intolerant of criticism."

Trade unionists, police, soldiers, protesting school children and striking civil servants have felt the lash of his tongue in stern warnings against anarchy and vandalism.

Hours before he left for the U.N. World Summit on Social Development Thursday Mr. Mandela told businessmen in Johannesburg his presence was seen as a weakness by workers and students trying to press unreasonable demands.

"I have closed that chapter. I have begged them. Now they must beg me," he said.

On Wednesday Mr. Mandela warned during a whip-cracking tour of unruly black schools around Cape Town that he would no longer tolerate classroom strikes and demonstrations.

"I just want to warn you that my patience is getting exhausted. I am prepared to come down on anybody who takes advantage... to drag this country into anarchy," he said.

Opening the 1995 parliamentary session three weeks ago, Mr. Mandela said he would crack down on strike violence, dissent in the police and army and any threat to the country's stability.

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From the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 until January 1992 — when the last such study was done — the officer cited three combat operations — including the invasions of Panama and



An elderly woman prays before burning incense at the Irieido Memorial in Tokyo. Local survivors from the Great Tokyo Raid by U.S. B-29 bombers paid tribute to the dead, marking the 50th anniversary of the raid. The raid wiped out 270,000 houses within three hours 50 years ago (AFP photo)

Police move into place for Indian state polls

NEW DELHI (R) — Thousands of paramilitary police took up positions in the eastern state of Bihar Friday to ensure peaceful voting as the current round of Indian state elections moved into its final phase.

The vote in Bihar, which begins Saturday and continues on March 15 and 19, has already been postponed once because of the poor security situation.

Federal Election Commissioner T.N. Seshan warned Thursday that he would stop the vote again if things did not go smoothly Saturday.

Mr. Seshan threatened to declare the vote in Bihar null and void if it was "damaged" due to the state government's failure to deploy paramilitary police forces adequately.

Bihar will be the last of six states to hold assembly elections in February and March in what is seen as a key test for the government of Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao.

Mr. Rao's Congress Party, hit by a series of reverses in state elections last year, needs to stop the rot and produce a creditable performance to position itself for general elections due by the middle of 1996.

Up to 50 people, including a candidate, have been killed in the campaign in Bihar, a wild and populous agricultural and mining state in eastern India.

Senior local official Rajiv Kumar told the Press Trust of India (PTI) that 3,000 paramilitary police had moved into place in the Ranchi district of Bihar to ensure a trouble-free vote Saturday.

"We should never forget that the prosperity of Tokyo, today one of the biggest and most vibrant cities in the world, is built on the sacrifices of those who lost their lives in the air raid," Governor Suzuki said.

Thousands of relatives of the air-raid victims, Tokyo City officials and diplomats, including U.S. Ambassador Walter Mondale, attended the rally at central Hibiya Park.

"My 20-year-old brother was severely burned. He jumped into the Sumida River and died," Chiyoko Nakazato, 68, said after laying a wreath at the Tokyo Irieido Temple.

"I had to step over many corpses to flee to a nearby park," she quietly told reporters.

"As far as I am concerned, the Americans are still enemies. I shall never forget," said Toshio Obayashi, who lost several relatives in the overnight raid of March 9-10, 1945.

"It's true, Japan did start the war. But we were victims of the Americans," Ms. Obayashi, 74, said, her face as dry and wrinkled as parchment.

PTI reported that up to 10,000 security personnel had been deployed in Arunachal Pradesh for the vote, and Indian Air Force helicopters had helped transport personnel to the more remote parts.

PTI said that in the neighbouring state of Orissa, where the second and final day of voting took place Thursday, an angry mob had sacked two polling stations, tearing up voting papers and smashing ballot boxes.

The leftist Janata Dal is expected to retain control of both Orissa and Bihar, but with much reduced majorities.

Counting also takes place Saturday in the western state of Maharashtra, India's most industrialised area, where the state-ruled Congress Party is expected to scrape neck home, and in neighbouring Gujarat, where the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is looking to take power.

American airline introduces carry-on meals

DALLAS (R) — You heard of carry-on luggage. How about carry-on meals? American Airlines, in an effort to trim costs, has launched more casual "bistro" service on short flights.

Under the new service, passengers pick up their breakfast or lunch from a cart set up by the boarding gate. Only first-class passengers get meal service at their seats, the largest airline said. Spokesman

Crawley said the new service will let passengers eat before boarding and will prevent waste from meals that are eaten on board the plane.

"The shorter flights, where we find the waste, tend to eat meals on long flights," he said, noting passengers tend to eat meals on long flights.

Federal Election Commissioner T.N. Seshan warned Thursday that he would stop the vote again if things did not go smoothly Saturday.

Mr. Seshan threatened to declare the vote in Bihar null and void if it was "damaged" due to the state government's failure to deploy paramilitary police forces adequately.

Bihar will be the last of six states to hold assembly elections in February and

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When warmth is dangerous

DEATHS FROM carbon monoxide poisoning have been a sad feature of life during the winter season. Most of them were mainly due to the reliance of the majority of our people on kerosene stoves for heating. Central heating and other forms of modern heating systems are simply unaffordable to the greater number of Jordanians. In the process, inhalation of dangerous fumes goes on in most of those households which depend on traditional forms of heating in cold weather. The problem came to light once again several days ago when a 75-year-old man and his 20-year-old mentally ill daughter were found dead in Zarka of carbon monoxide poisoning.

We believe that the concerned authorities should not accept these accidents as unavoidable. The fact that the victims are mostly poor people should not absolve the government from its responsibility to educate better the people about the safe use of kerosene or even gas heaters by conducting a concerted campaign to that end. Until an affordable heating system is found and made available to the less fortunate among us, users of the hazardous methods of heating are entitled to better knowledge on how to stay alive while keeping warm.

One way of handling the problem is to make it compulsory to properly install hazardous heaters by including suitable ventilation systems in place. We have laws on almost everything. Why not enact rules and regulations on this issue as well? Vendors of such kinds of heaters could be obliged by law to install these heaters in a proper way as a precondition for sale. A built-in mechanism for safe ventilation could also be manufactured as part and parcel of the old fashioned heating equipment. Violators would be penalised, but chiefly as a way to instil concern and precaution in the minds of the end users. Otherwise many people would go on losing their lives and the lives of their loved ones unnecessarily and cheaply.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE ARAB-Israeli foreign ministers' meeting in Amman this (last) week exposed Israel's real intentions to the whole world when the Israeli foreign minister voiced his government's adamant stand with regard to the repatriation of the displaced Palestinians, said Mahmoud Rimawi in Al Ra'i daily. Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti used diplomatic terms like modest achievement to describe the outcome of the four-party meeting, but that does not negate the fact that the meeting was a total failure, thanks to Israel's intransigence. In Shimon Peres's view, the return of the hundreds of thousands of Palestinians to their homeland would create confusion and danger to the peace process, said the writer. He said Israel is telling the Arab parties that the continued displacement of Palestinians and their settlement in the neighbouring Arab countries is the only way to ensure security for the Jewish state. Israel is clearly trying to avoid any discussion with Arabs over the implementation of U.N. resolutions, which gave the Palestinians the right to return to their homelands occupied since 1967, while the Arab parties are agreed on a joint stand and determined to see these resolutions implemented, continued the writer. The communiqué issued at the end of the one-day meeting has reflected the ministers' failure to settle the issue despite the creation of follow-up committees which according to the writer, are not expected to achieve progress towards softening Israel's stand.

A COLUMNIST in Al Dastour discussed the current tour of the Middle East by the U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, expressing the view that this tour was bound to achieve nothing like the other previous visits he made to the region. Saleh Qallab recalled that Mr. Christopher has already made eight visits trying to achieve progress on the Israeli-Syrian track but has failed to achieve any progress. This time, Mr. Christopher is bound to encounter an Israeli government that is adamant in rejecting the implementation of U.N. resolutions and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Golan as well as Arab demands that it sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to improve the peace climate, said the writer. With its open-biased attitude towards the Jewish state, Washington and its envoys can only mean bringing about a final and comprehensive settlement on all tracks, continued the writer.

Jordanian Perspective

By Dr. Musa Keltani

Israel delivers yet another blow to peace process

IT IS an understatement that last week's Arab-Israeli meeting in Amman on the fate of the displaced Palestinians was disappointing. The Israeli posture at the gathering with Jordan, Egypt and the Palestinians was a serious blow to the entire peace process, given that the return of Palestinians in the diaspora, whether displaced, expelled or refugees, is one of the basic pillars of an equitable Arab-Israeli peace settlement.

Shimon Peres, the Israeli foreign minister who represented his country at the Amman meeting, philosophised in his public comments on the issue with little substance. In the closed session that followed, he stuck to his guns that Israel was not even ready to acknowledge that the displaced have the right to return home and that the West Bank and Gaza Strip did not have the needed infrastructure to accommodate returning Palestinians. He refused to budge from a position that was essentially based on a premise that the problem of the displaced was simply a humanitarian one as if the Palestinians who were forced out of their homes as a result of Arab-Israeli wars had now political rights and the right to go back and settle down to start a new life in their own homeland.

Again, appearing before the press after the meeting, Mr. Peres said his country was not questioning the right of the Palestinians to return but that it had to be in an "orderly" fashion. If indeed Israel is willing to accept that the displaced Palestinians, then what was stopping Mr. Peres from acknowledging that Israel would allow the displaced to return home, but in a phased process?

No one is pressing Israel to allow the hundreds of thousands of displaced in Jordan and elsewhere to cross the bridge and enter the West Bank and Gaza Strip since it is clear that such a sudden movement of people would only lead to socio-economic chaos in the territories. Indeed we need a carefully drawn-up process that takes into consideration all factors and elements with a view to preempting problems.

Thanks but no thanks to Israel for its magnanimous acceptance that the problem of displaced is a humanitarian one. What we are discussing here is not charity, but one of the basic rights of the people driven out of their homes for no fault of their own by a power which sought territorial expansion. So let Israel fool no-one by its sudden interest in philanthropy and humanitarian sympathy for the displaced Palestinians since the sentiment is a cover for its refusal to accept one of the basic principles of the process.

By insisting on its own version of a solution regardless of Arab good faith and hopes that an end to the conflict is in sight, Israel is not only undermining the peace process but also fuelling Arab frustration that does not bode well for the security and stability of the region.

NATO misses its old enemy

By Jonathan Clayton
Reuter

BRUSSELS — "We are going to do something terrible to you, we are going to take away your enemy," the aide to former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev is reported to have told U.S. negotiators near the end of the cold war.

He may have been joking, but few surveying today's confusion at NATO's headquarters in Brussels would be tempted to disagree.

Victory over its vanished foe, the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact, has presented the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation with a huge identity crisis as it casts around for a role in the post-cold war world.

"One moment it is out-of-area crisis control, then enlargement, then suddenly Mediterranean dialogue, the danger of extremists and weapons proliferation. Oh for the good old days of Soviet threat," said one NATO source, only half in jest.

The sense of lack of direction has recently been exacerbated by a corruption scandal swirling around NATO's Belgian Secretary General Willy Claes who faces mounting pressure to resign after only five months on the job.

The planners who once laboured over cold war doctrines such as flexible response and mutual assured destruction are now asking whether the most successful military alliance ever constructed has a future in a world without the reason for its creation.

NATO politicians are unanimous it does, but divided as to what it is.

"NATO's core purpose of collective security remains, but new goals and programmes have been added," Richard Holbrooke, U.S. assistant secretary of State for Euro-

M. KAHIL



pean affairs wrote in the latest issue of Foreign Affairs magazine.

He cited collective crisis management, out-of-area force projection, and the encouragement of stability to the east through programmes such as NATO's Partnership for Peace (PFP) initiative as all new areas for alliance activity.

"Designed decades ago to counter a single, clearly defined threat, NATO is only just beginning a historic transformation," he wrote, adding NATO would remain the central pillar of any new security architecture.

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pean affairs wrote in the latest issue of Foreign Affairs magazine.

He added that after a near-disastrous foray into peace enforcement in support of U.N. operations in former Yugoslavia, NATO had now settled on the issue of enlargement as its main contribution to an emerging new European security architecture.

NATO's role in enforcing a no-fly zone over Bosnia and inflicting air strikes for violations of heavy weapons zones and U.N.-designated safe havens triggered one of the worst trans-Atlantic disputes in alliance history.

U.S. politicians, arguing NATO's credibility was being dragged down to the level of that of the United Nations, wanted tough action against Serb gunners.

But Britain, France and the U.N., worried about reprisals against peacekeepers on the ground, were more conciliatory.

Before the wounds from that row had healed,

NATO announced it was setting up a study on how to enlarge eastwards and take in new members from the former Warsaw Pact, notably Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary.

The U.S.-led initiative drew grous of disapproval from Moscow and raised eyebrows among the allies who argued the PFP initiative had barely had time to bear fruit.

"Enlargement has been out on the fast track, we are no longer an alliance to fight an enemy and in that case the only credible role for NATO is that it contributes towards extending security," said one alliance official.

Independent analysts concur that NATO's most important new role is as the chief architect of a new security order in Europe, but many question whether NATO is right to open the door to just a handful of Eastern states while keeping others out.

Recounting horrors of war

By Teruaki Ueno
Reuter

TOKYO — On March 10, 1945, Kazuyo Funato was looking forward to leaving junior school. The graduation ceremony was two weeks later and she was excited about moving on to the next stage in her 12-year-old life.

Then, shortly after midnight on March 10, the world as she knew it ended when thousands of fire bombs rained down on Tokyo from U.S. B-29 bombers.

It was the start of what became known as the great Tokyo air raid, an event that outside Japan has long been overshadowed by the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

But for many residents of the Japanese capital who went through the raid, the raid, in which an estimated 100,000 people died, is spoken of with the same bit-

terness as the nuclear attacks.

"The atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are well-known throughout the world, but little is known about Tokyo air raid," said Hidee Shiya, director of a special exhibition on the air raid at the Edo-Tokyo museum.

The exhibition is part of ceremonies planned to com-

memorate the tragedy on Friday.

Other events include a mass rally, film shows, a memorial service, concerts dedicated to the dead.

A rally had been held each year on the same day but on a much smaller scale.

"This year's events bear no comparison with previous ones as we observe the 50th anniversary of the air raid," said a Tokyo metropolitan government official.

Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama was invited to attend the rally but has

chosen instead to send a representative who will read his prepared speech.

Mr. Shiya says the point of the commemoration ceremonies is to remind the world how innocent people can suffer in wars.

"We don't mean to say who was right or who was wrong. We just want to emphasise the damaging effect on ordinary people of the air raid," he said.

Five of Ms. Funato's family of 10 died in the 2½-hour raid.

"Incendiaries were falling all over the place like rain," Ms. Funato, 62, told Reuters in an interview. "We were trapped in our house in something like a melting pot of fire."

The March 10 raid was the biggest in a series of massive strikes by the U.S. air force from November 1944 that devastated Japanese cities.

Tokyo at the time was a

city of mainly wooden buildings which made the devastation from the fire bombs so much worse.

Ms. Funato fled with her sister and two brothers to a cave used as an air-raid shelter.

"As we ran around to get away from the bombs, we saw hundreds of homes burning," she said.

Her 20-year-old brother Minoru was the first among the five in her family who died.

"My brother Minoru caught fire and ran out of the cave. Then he was engulfed by the flames," she said. "He was burned alive."

Ms. Funato described life in the cave as "an unbearable battle against violent heat and fire with no water."

"My six-year-old sister Hiroko had bad burns all over her head, face and hands. She was crying for water," she said.

Violence growing in Pakistan

By Alastair Lyon
Reuter

through Pakistan to Afghan mujahideen guerrillas fighting Soviet occupation.

Many weapons were diverted to the arsenals of Pakistani politicians, criminals and drug-dealers, enabling local militias and private armies to outgun badly-equipped, corrupt police.

A turbulent form of democracy has replaced military rule, but today's government and opposition are locked in a power struggle in which Pakistan's plight often seems ignored.

"The breakdown in law and order is a reflection in part of the major problem we confront in the political arena as a result of confrontational politics," Mr. Qureshi said.

The 1990s have brought few signs that Pakistan's political elite, drawn largely from landowning "feudals", can relieve the poverty and ignorance in which the majority of its rapidly growing population of nearly 130 million remain mired.

Ms. Bhutto, her critics say, is loath to risk alienating her landlord powerbase in Sindh province by seeking a political solution to the grievances of Karachi's Urdu-speaking Mohajirs.

Government officials began a dialogue with the disaffected Mohajir National Movement (MQM) last year, but this has yet to bear fruit. The MQM distrusts the state, which it blames for creating a rival MQM Haqqi faction. Many in the government suspect the MQM of harbouring separatist ambitions.

"If the law and order situation does not improve, it would be very difficult to get foreign investors, particularly major ones, to actually invest their money," former Prime Minister Moeneen Qureshi told reporters in Islamabad on Wednesday.

Pakistan's militant Islamic groups may be too profoundly divided to pose an immediate threat to the state.

But this year's spectacular successes of the Taliban militia in Afghanistan, many of whose recruits were Afghan refugees studying at religious schools in Pakistan, have set an example of how Islam can be used as a unifying banner.

"The government, hostage to the expediencies of politics, has turned a blind eye to the violations of the law by the religious lobby," writes Razia Bhatti, editor of the Karachi monthly Newsline.

"Now, belatedly, it seems to have woken up to the sectarian nightmare. But having permitted sectarian fanatics to amass, display and use arms unhampered for so long, it will find the genie that much more difficult to contain," she argues.

LETTERS

A new tomorrow

To the Editor:

I JUST watched a TV show on the Israeli television, Channel Two (Tuesday Feb. 28). To my astonishment, Mirage, a Jordanian band, appeared on the show. Wa'el Abo Nowar and his wife appeared and sang a beautiful song at the end of the show, during



Californians seek peace on an earthquake fault

By Karen Lowe
Agence France Presse

LOS ANGELES — A vibration on a highway or in a high-rise building or a glass of water that quivers almost imperceptibly can cause hearts to race and palms to sweat in this earthquake-prone city.

"A truck going by that rattles the house a little will make my wife's eyes dart around. Before, those things could be easily ignored," said Stu Yahn, 67, who lives in Northridge, the heart of last year's earthquake.

"Now, we wonder, is this the preamble to the big one," he said, referring to the long-predicted California earthquake that forecasters warn could be strong enough to devastate this city of 8.6 million people.

Those shake to the core by last January 19th's earthquake that killed 61 people and caused billions of dollars in damages have already fled. Those who remain seem determined to stay — damn the predictions.

The Snub California Earthquake Centre has started a series of earthquake after 30 years of relative quiet with a 60 per cent chance of a major tremor in the next 30 years.

Worse, the U.S. Geological Survey said recently that slippage from the 1994 Northridge quake, which measured 6.7 on the Richter scale, put Southern California at an even greater risk of earthquakes than previously feared.

"Where would I go?" asked Playa del Rey Real Estate agent George Aronson, 81, who has survived three earthquakes and the recent floods and droughts and who remains wedded to the area's weather and natural beauty.

"I love it here. If a 9.0 comes, then I just figure well, my number's up."

Incredibly, many insist they don't even think about a quake and find reasons for believing that they will be spared, usually because they have been little affected in the past.

"We live on bedrock," said Ann Erickson as she tools around the steep hills of nearby Pasadena in her green Jaguar. "No, I don't think about it. So the

ground shakes for a few seconds. It's better than shovelling snow for hours."

Adrian Finkelstein, a psychiatrist with the University of California, said many who survived the last quake believe they'll get through the next one or are in "some form of denial."

Others, he said, still on edge from the last quake have deepened their religious faiths, take anxiety medication, relaxation exercises or undergo hypnosis.

Asked how he deals with it, "I am not in denial. I know it could happen any time... but I have weighed the benefits (of staying) against the risks and prepared myself well."

Survivors who lived in or around Northridge say that, yes, to make psychological peace sitting atop an unstable fault, they made concessions.

Terra Yahn, 47, sleeps in her street clothes every night while her husband, Stu, keeps an earthquake kit by his bedside complete with cellular phone, flashlight, water, radio and tools to turn off the gas.

Many keep the gas tank in their car full and the trunk well stocked with food, medicine and supplies. They reinforce their walls with steel rods and cover windows — potential bombs in a quake — with a transparent film.

Laurie Adamshick, 40, recalled the night of the quake when she clutched her newborn as everything went pitch black and then what sounded like a train roaring through her house sent dishes and bookcases flying around the rooms.

"Even though we're ready for the next one — and I mean really ready — a small rumble still makes me jump out of our skin," she said. "Everytime we have another aftershock I feel the panic rising."

Sometimes, she said, she asks herself: "What am I doing here? I shouldn't even be living here."

Things that never had any significance to her before now make her catch her breath. She says she can't even talk about going over bridges and going up in high office buildings gives her the creeps.

"If I feel it vibrate even a little, it scares me," Ms. Adamshick said. "I didn't have that sensitivity before."

King urges Rabin to speed up peace process

(Continued from page 1)

with King Hussein at the Hashemite Palace that the main theme for the meeting was ways and means to accelerate the implementation of the peace treaty.

The Aqaba summit, came two weeks ahead of a visit to the U.S. by King Hussein. The sources said the King was scheduled to head for Washington on March 24 and a meeting with President Bill Clinton was scheduled for March 26 or 27.

West Bank lawyers vote

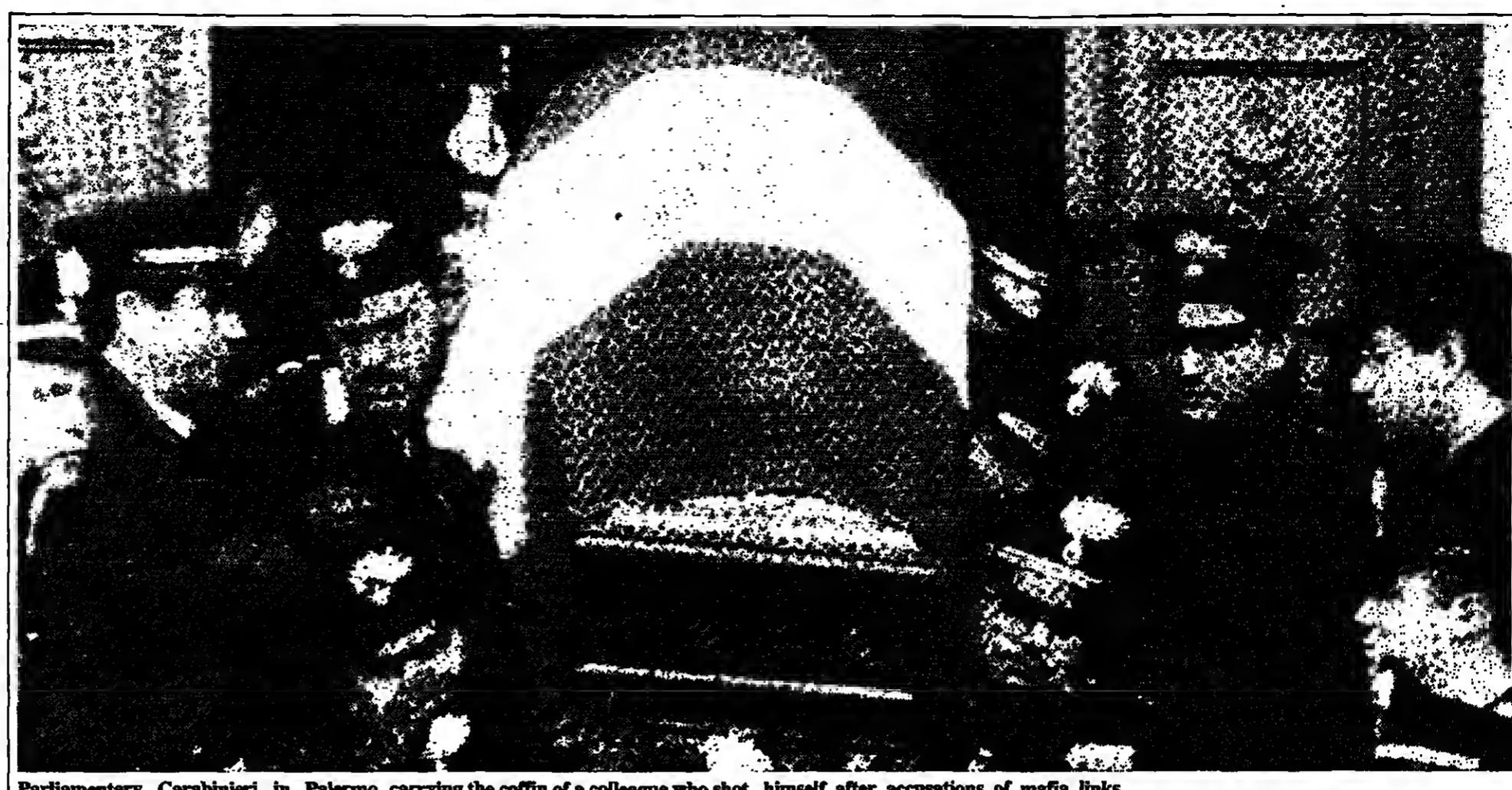
(Continued from page 1)

support to the Palestinian people and to their national rights and identity and to enable them to establish their own institutions that will have independence in accordance with the agreements between Jordan and the Palestine National Authority (PNA).

The prosecutor general can appeal the results of any elections they may deem illegal to the Higher Court of Justice and ask for the council's dissolution.

Speaking to the Jordan Times, Mr. Tal said that he "had no idea" if he would file the issue to the High Court. "It depends on how procedures go today," he concluded. During a meeting with Mr. Nasser on Thursday, however, Mr. Tal said that the ministry "will implement its decision." During the elections, representatives of the Ministry of Justice refused to sign ballot papers belonging to West Bank lawyers (JBA) law stipulates that the ballots must be signed by the minister of justice or his representatives.

The PNA urged lawyers from the West Bank to support the minister's decision, said Omer Khatib, the charge d'affairs at the Palesti-



Parliamentary Carabinieri in Palermo carrying the coffin of a colleague who shot himself after accusations of mafia links

Rome turns a blind eye to mafia's killing spree

A spate of murders shows Cosa Nostra is regaining its political impunity, writes Andrew Gumbel in Rome.

SICILY has not seen such a grim spate of killings for years. The first victims were three young people in Corleone, the home of the most fearsome of the mafia clans, but which had not seen a murder for almost 17 years.

Then, the action moved to Palermo, where three men were gunned down in quick succession less than a month ago.

Recently Domenico Buscetta, nephew of the most important informer to have broken ranks with Cosa Nostra, Tommaso Buscetta, was shot dead as he was leaving the jewellery store that he ran in the Sicilian capital.

In all, at least nine people have died in Sicily in mafia hits in one week this month. And, nobody is betting that it will stop there.

"This is a major reaffirmation of mafia power," said Pino Arlacchi, one of Italy's top mafia experts and the deputy chairman of the parliamentary anti-mafia commission.

"If the state does not give an appropriate response, we could soon see murders of prominent public figures."

The outburst of violence provides convincing proof that the mafia is recovering fast, both from the capture, two years ago, of its most

powerful leader, Salvatore "Toto" Riina, and from the series of judicial investigations that have been launched thanks to the testimony of mafiosi who have cooperated with the judicial authorities — the people who have done most to breathe Riina's power structure.

Domenico was the 11th relative that Tommaso Buscetta has lost since turning state's evidence in 1984. Another victim, Marcello Grado, was a distant cousin of the informer Totuccio Cootorno, who has lost 24 family members and close friends.

Buscetta provided a convincing account of why such a massacre should resume in an interview he gave to the Rome daily *La Repubblica*. "Informers are a real weak point (for the mafia)," he said. "For two years, Toto Riina has been preoccupied by nothing else. He tried to discredit them but it didn't work. Now he's gone back down that old road well-worn years ago... killing innocent people."

It is, perhaps, no coincidence that the violence re-

sumed just as the former Italia prime minister, Giulio Andreotti, was being ordered to stand trial on charges of collusion with the mafia. The 17 turncoats whose evidence forms the basis of the case for the prosecution may want now to think twice about testifying in court.

There may also be a link with reports that a senior member of Cosa Nostra in jail in the United States, Gaetano Badalamenti, is thinking of turning state's evidence.

But the background to the recent violence may lie beyond the world of organised crime. In Sicily, you hear the same complaint again and again: that the state has lost interest in combatting the mafia, and that communication has broken down between the politicians in Rome and the judges and anti-mafia campaigners on the ground.

"Politicians don't want to recognise the danger of Cosa Nostra," Mr. Buscetta said. "They are the biggest obstacle in the way of the magistrate, they are casting

doubt on the importance of men of honour who decide to cooperate with the state."

The problems began a year ago, with the rise to power of Silvio Berlusconi and his right-wing coalition. In the election campaign, prominent opponents accused Mr. Berlusconi of receiving mafia support in Sicily. These accusations took on greater weight with the arrest of a financial adviser to Riina, Pino Mandarli, last December.

Taps on Mr. Mandarli's phone showed that the mafia had, sought, frequent contact with Sicilian members of Mr. Berlusconi's Forza Italia party and its neo-Fascist ally, the National Alliance, and that the contacts were, at least to some extent, reciprocal.

"In 1992 and 1993 we managed to break the links the mafia had enjoyed with politics since the war. Now the mafia is working with new political allies," Mr. Arlacchi said. "We don't know for sure who they are yet, but the evidence is building."

The Independent.

Queen chairs symposium

(Continued from page 3)

Inclusive and participatory political systems must be accompanied by equally open economic systems. Governments or international donors alone cannot adequately implement strategies for social welfare and cohesion. Social solidarity is deeply rooted in the cultural norms and communal family structures of the south. It does not have to be invented or created, though it may have to be strengthened and stimulated, in our increasingly urban, consumer-oriented societies, however, such social solidarity can only be adequately promoted by a parallel process of economic expansion that guarantees an equitable distribution of benefits.

The recent report of the international commission on peace and food of which I am a member, entitled "Uncommon Opportunities: An Agenda for Peace and Equitable Development," identified new opportunities and strategies for the conversion of industries of war into industries of economic productivity, food production, employment and peace. This vital transformation of our priorities, also, cannot be undertaken solely by governments.

Consequently, the role of the family and the cohesive influence of social traditions. Conversely, we in the south, can profitably learn from the north's experience in modern democratic systems and civil society structures.

Therefore, there is no reason to put the cart before the horse... first of all come to understand on the security issues and after that return to discussion on questions of the nature of peace and the nature of the final line," he added.

NGOs can play an effective role in the promotion of social development, particularly among marginalised groups such as rural women, and in the formulation of effective strategies to accelerate job creation, regional cooperation, demilitarisation and peace. In Jordan, the Noor Al Hussein Foundation, Security arrangements with Israel's army chief on Saturday night.

are cooperating to convene a conference on human security in the Middle East to further these goals along the lines of the international commission's findings.

As we move forward to promote sustainable human development throughout the south, we should recognise and build on the strengths that exist within our own cultures.

The social problems we all suffer from today — especially those of social fragmentation and pressures on individuals in rapidly expanding urban cultures — lend themselves to cross-cultural exchanges and learning. For instance, the strengths of Middle Eastern cultures are rooted in its powerful family structures and its tradition of social cohesion based on religious and cultural values; hence, widespread poverty and unemployment in the Middle East are not accompanied by widespread homelessness or criminal violence.

Northern industrial societies have much to learn from the Middle East and other southern cultures about the role of family and the cohesive influence of social traditions. Conversely, we in the south, can profitably learn from the north's experience in modern democratic systems and civil society structures.

We do have much to learn from each other. We certainly have much to give to each other. And we have good reason to do both, if we are to translate the recommendations of this summit into concrete actions, sustainable progress, and a "society for all."

Thank you very much. I wish you great success in your deliberations.

Christopher says peace process reenergised

(Continued from page 1)

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said after meeting Mr. Christopher on Thursday: "The only and the main obstacle to moving ahead with the Palestinians is terrorism."

Addressing Israel's demand for a clampdown on

guerrillas opposed to their peace deal, Mr. Rabin said: "We are doing all we can. I have no magic stick."

Self-rule began in Gaza and the West Bank enclave of Jericho in May. Its expansion has been delayed by Israeli security concerns.

Health, education and income generation.

Norway also announced a small raise in its funding for 1995 and the European Union "pledged to consider with sympathy UNRWA's request for further funding to complete construction of Gaza hospital."

PIP is part of the U.N. general programme to support the peace process economically and socially and is specifically directed at the West Bank and Gaza.

The first phase of PIP concentrated on job creation and social services, while phase two includes an investment and income generation plan. In general, PIP seeks to update the infrastructure of UNRWA within the five-year interim period. Then, the time comes for the agency to hand over its responsibilities to the Palestinian Authority and to hand over its government, the institutions and infrastructure will be in good order.

The interim period is the time span set out by the DoP, from the start of autonomy in the occupied territories until the final status is decided upon.

The move of headquarters to Gaza, as approved by the U.N. following the signing of the PLO-Israel accord, will be financed separately by donor countries over and above contributions for the agency's regular fund, Mr. Turkmen said. This, he added, was also approved by delegates at the meeting.

Mr. Turkmen said that the

move to Gaza would cost \$14 to \$15 million, but \$5 to \$6 million is expected to be compensation for those UNRWA staff who do not wish to shift to the new headquarters. Also speaking at the press conference was U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Immigration, Population and Refugees Phyllis Oakley and the French permanent representative to U.N. organisations and institutions in Vienna, Ambassador Jean Dasque.

The European Union's opinion is that UNRWA should continue its activities and tasks, which is ever more important considering the circumstances," Mr. Dasque said.

"With its programmes, activities and PIP, the agency can contribute to peace and stability in the region." Prior to the meeting some of the participants visited Gaza and the West Bank. In this context Ms. Oakley told Thursday's press conference that many of the doors had been closed due to the difficult conditions. However, witnessing it first hand had made an impression, she said.

The visit to the Gaza and the West Bank, the frank discussions here and the progress of the peace process have all come together and increased the importance of UNRWA's role, Ms. Oakley said.

Ms. Oakley and Mr. Dasque were the leaders of the two working groups which were held on the second and final day of the meetings.

Dollar plunge adds pressure on Arab Gulf economies

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The latest plunge in the U.S. dollar will put further pressure on Arab Gulf economies that are already hit by low oil prices, experts said Wednesday.

As the U.S. currency slid to an all-time low against the Japanese yen, Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states could suffer from a dual loss since their oil exports are priced in dollars and their currencies are pegged to the greenback.

"The dollar's decline will have an adverse impact on the economies of Arab Gulf states since crude oil is their main source of income and the U.S. dollar is its official price," said Mohammad Al Asumi, chief economist at the state-run Emirates Industrial Bank (EIB).

"This means a decline in the GCC's purchasing power and an increase in the value of imports. What aggravates the problem is that GCC states import more than 80 per cent of their goods and services from Japan and Europe," he pointed out.

GCC states — Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) — have already been hurt by the strong yen, as Japan is their biggest commercial partner, with a two-way trade of \$32

billion in 1993.

A sharp drop in crude prices has slashed their income from more than \$180 billion in 1981 to an average \$70 billion a year. But the real value of the oil exports is far lower considering the weak dollar.

The sharp fluctuations in the dollar have prompted calls on GCC states to devalue their currencies from the greenback and press for a change in oil pricing. But officials have ruled out such changes in the near future, apparently for political reasons.

Only the Kuwaiti dinar is linked to a basket of currencies but the dollar has the lion share. Its decline last year led to an increase in the price of consumer products imported from non-dollar countries but the influence was stronger in the other GCC members.

The value of GCC imports have increased in the past two years because of the weak U.S. dollar. This of course has a depressing effect on economic activities and the government budgets," Mr. Asumi told AFP.

"Bankers said 'GCC budget deficits could widen this year if the dollar remained low as this means a higher import bill and lower real revenues. Most of them have slashed

spending for the current fiscal year and others are planning to do so in expectation oil prices will remain weak.

The GCC produces around 13 million barrels per day (b/d) of oil and crude exports account for more than 80 per cent of their total exports.

Oil prices have remained below OPEC's minimum target of \$21 since the Gulf war, averaging \$18.44 in 1992 and falling to \$16.33 in 1993 and \$15.33 in 1994. This pushed the GCC's earnings from \$77 billion to \$74 billion and around \$70 billion.

"There is no doubt the decline in the dollar will increase pressure on the Gulf economies but at the same time it could prompt them to press ahead with reforms," said Zuhair Kawani, a UAE stockbroker and economic expert.

"It could also revive the debate on the need to detach their currencies from the weak U.S. dollar. This of course has a depressing effect on economic activities and the government budgets," Mr. Asumi told AFP.

An official breakdown showed GCC's imports from the U.S. stood at around \$9 billion in 1994 while those from other non-dollar industrial giants Japan, Britain, Germany and France exceeded \$20 billion.

Rubin says U.S. committed to keeping dollar safe haven

ARLINGTON, Virginia (R) — U.S. Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin defended the embattled dollar Friday, saying the United States was determined to keep the currency as a safe haven in times of international economic turmoil.

Mr. Rubin made clear the United States and other wealthy industrial countries are willing to play the market intervention card again should such an effort seem sensible as a tactic to rebuild the dollar's value.

"This administration is fully committed to the sound monetary and fiscal policies necessary for sustained growth, low inflation, a strong and stable dollar, and maintenance of the dollar as the world's principal reserve currency," he told a news conference.

The dollar's role as the premier reserve currency that investors flock to ride out international storms has come into question in the wake of persistent budget deficits, the controversial Mexican bailout and the slowing of the economic expansion.

In his remarks, Mr. Rubin said the treasury and Federal Reserve were in close contact and were continuing to consult with their counterparts in the other Group of Seven

(G-7) nations — Germany, Japan, Britain, France, Canada and Italy.

"Our policy is to intervene when it makes sense and not to do so when it doesn't," he told the National Newspaper Association.

The United States joined its economic allies in a concerted effort last week to buy dollars in the huge and volatile currency markets to halt the greenback's downward spiral, but the effort proved futile.

But Mr. Rubin, in his carefully worded remarks, appeared to take the view that this did not mean the United States was abandoning this weapon or intended to leave the currency unprotected in the marketplace.

He also reiterated the view of Federal Reserve Board Chairman Alan Greenspan Wednesday that the United States has more than enough economic muscle to aid the dollar despite its loan package for Mexico.

He said the treasury's exchange stabilisation fund has "more than adequate" reserves to defend the dollar on global currency markets.

One of the architects of the Mexican rescue package, Mr. Rubin defended the plan, saying the United States had little choice but to help its

neighbour and key trading partner.

The risks associated with acting were far less than the risks to our interests of taking no action at all," he said.

Mr. Rubin said he was convinced that in time investor confidence in Mexico will be restored, adding, "while markets will move around, the programme is sound and it should work."

He took aim at another concern often cited by market players for reducing their dollar cache — the belief that the United States is politically incapable of making the painful choices needed to restore fiscal balance.

"We are also resolute in our commitment to fiscal discipline and continued progress on reducing the deficit," he said.

But he conceded that taking on the mountain of debt the United States has amassed is not an easy process and achieving a budget surplus is a long way down the road.

"It seems to me that the proper objective of this country is to move toward a balanced budget in a careful and thoughtful way with the decisions made in the context of the circumstances of each year that those decisions have to be faced," he said.

Australian government announces plans for tight 1995-96 budget

SYDNEY (AFP) — Australian Treasurer Ralph Willis, grappling to control unsustainable economic growth, announced plans Friday to slash the country's budget deficit.

He said the government would "act decisively to ensure that growth is sustained rather than short-circuited by rising inflation, an increasing current account deficit and higher interest rates."

Mr. Willis has already increased his forecast for the current account deficit in the financial year to June 1995 from 1.8 billion Australian dollars (\$13 billion) to 2.6 billion dollars.

The central Reserve Bank of Australia has increased its official interest rate from 4.75 per cent to 7.50 per cent since August 1994 to lock in low inflation as evidence of rapid economic growth set off alarm bells about future price rises.

The treasurer said he would "significantly tighten policy" in the 1995-96 budget to be announced in May to establish the basis for strong economic growth and low inflation over the medium term.

"Sustained economic growth over a period of years is the only sure way of reducing unemployment to acceptable levels as well as improving the living standards of all Australians," Mr. Willis said.

Australia's unemployment rate fell to 8.9 per cent in February from 10.4 per cent a year earlier but massive job growth has worried analysts

who say the economy is growing too fast, at an estimated four-to-five per cent annually.

Releasing his framework for the 1995-96 budget, Mr. Willis said the starting point for the 1995-96 budget deficit would be about 1.5 per cent of gross domestic product.

Guy Bruteo, senior economist at SBC Australia, said that this implied a budget deficit of 5.5-to-6.5 billion dollars before the government's fiscal tightening programme was implemented.

"It's only the starting point, the beginning of the process," said Stephen Halmarick, economist at National West Capital Markets, adding that the forecast budget for the financial year ahead would "certainly be a lot lower than that."

Mr. Willis said economic growth would remain strong in 1995-96 but would ease to a more sustainable rate.

"In 1995-96, the current account deficit will be favourably affected by the improved outlook for world growth, rising commodity prices and the breaking of the drought, which should all help to boost exports," Mr. Willis said.

But higher world interest rates would continue to increase the cost of servicing overseas debt, he added.

Mr. Willis said he aimed to achieve a budget surplus in 1996-97 and would tighten policy to boost national saving and constrain growth in domestic demand.

Mexico launches shock therapy on battered economy

MEXICO CITY (R) — Mexico's government launched a shock therapy programme on the battered economy on Thursday, unveiling a plan to raise taxes and slash spending that it said was bound to be hard on all Mexicans.

Struggling to break out of the country's worst economic crisis in more than a decade, the government promised Mexicans little gain and a lot of pain over the next few months and said it had basically run out of alternatives.

"There is no easy way out," Finance Minister Guillermo Ortiz said in a live television address that acknowledged the hardships millions of Mexicans — workers, small businesspeople and housewives — have suffered since the currency's devaluation in December.

The harsh economic plan is likely to anger some ordinary Mexicans already galvanized to social protest by a 14-month peasant rebellion in the southern state of Chiapas.

The economy, which President Ernesto Zedillo promised would grow by four per cent this year when he took office Dec. 1, is already in a deep recession.

Mr. Ortiz acknowledged that steps announced in the new package, such as tax

increases and a 35 per cent rise in gasoline prices, would add inflation to the economic situation.

Prices would rise by about 42 per cent this year, he said.

Against the backdrop of rapidly rising prices, millions of poor Mexicans were offered just a 10 per cent rise in the minimum wage, starting April 1.

Subject to congressional approval, value added tax would also rise to 15 per cent from 10 per cent, putting pressure on buyers, but also crimping sales in a country where tens of thousands of firms have already gone out of business.

It marks a stunning turnaround for a country once considered a darling of foreign investors.

But by tightening the belts on all Mexicans, rich and poor, they hope to win back the one commodity the country desperately needs out of this year.

With investors deserting Mexico in droves, the peso has lost more than 50 per cent of its value against the dollar since the December devaluation.

Faced with shortages of both confidence and hard currency, Mr. Ortiz said the country was unable to impose a more stable exchange rate

regime than its existing free float.

But with a mixture of high interest rates and timely intervention by the central bank in the foreign exchange markets, there should be a "substantial appreciation" of the exchange rate in the near future, Mr. Ortiz said.

Backing up the programme is more than \$50 billion offered Mexico last month by the United States, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other allies.

Mr. Ortiz said public spending would be slashed by 9.8 per cent from last year's levels, and government jobs would be axed.

The current account deficit, which mushroomed to almost \$30 billion last year as Mexico imported more than it could afford, was set to fall to about \$2 billion. It could be wiped out entirely, Mr. Ortiz said.

Such measures won cautious approval from financial analysts, but whether Mexican society would accept the sacrifices was a question even government officials were unable to answer.

"Nobody's denying that there are social costs associated with the adjustment programme," said one official, who asked not to be named.

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Only eight per cent said they were satisfied with the development of democracy in Russia. Bulgarians were the only nation with a lower level of satisfaction — four per cent.

Russians and Georgians were most skeptical about respect for human rights in their nations. Just 14 per cent were positive about human rights there.

In contrast, Albanians appeared as the former East Bloc's greatest optimists: 59 per cent believed Albania was headed in the right direction, 54 per cent expected an improvement in their household finances and the same percentage were satisfied with the level of human rights there.

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Survey shows falling Russian support for free market

BRUSSELS, Belgium (AP) — Support for the free market has plummeted among the Russians, with less than a quarter supporting the market economy, according to a survey by the European Union (EU).

The survey, based interviews with 1,000 Russians, found only 22 per cent, agreed with the "creation of a market economy... largely free from state control."

Sixty-three per cent said such an economy was wrong.

According to the EU's fifth "Eurobarometer" report on public opinion in eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, Russian support for the free market has fallen 25 percentage points since 1991.

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HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY MARCH 11, 1995

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Handle money matters wisely and they will soon be behind you. Come to a better understanding with a loved one today. Talk less and listen more to what's being said.

Taurus: (April 20 to May 19)

Business
Daily
BeatA review
of economic news
from the Arabic pressTCC opens
'collect' calls
to U.S., U.K.
and Australia

THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS Corporation has been providing a new service since the beginning of this year whereby businessmen and travellers could call "collect" from Britain, U.S. and Australia in the first stage through the international exchange operator who will make the connection either against the caller's credit card or on his/her account as a "collect call." Callers from Jordan to the above mentioned countries, should dial 1800002 (to Britain), 1880000 or 18800447 (to U.S.) and 18800002 (to Australia). To call from Britain, the number to dial is 800390962, from U.S. 8002302763 and from Australia 1800881969. The service for other countries will be provided later. (Al Dusour).

THE AL Azraq Cooperative Society will Saturday begin supplying the market with iodised salt. The manager of the Al Azraq Salt Refining Factory said 50 tonnes of iodised salt will be put on the market every day to be sold at 130 fils per kilogramme. The manager explained that the factory could not supply bakeries with salt at JD 30 per tonne and at the same time add iodine to table salt and sell it at the old price. Iodine costs \$20 per kilogramme and, according to the manager, large amounts that should be sufficient for two months were imported from Belgium. However, he pointed out that the factory would continue to supply the market with iodised table salt as long as it does not supply the bakeries with salt at JD 30 per tonne. "We will automatically stop adding iodine to the salt if we go back to supplying bakeries with salt at the old price unless the price is increased to JD 76 per tonne which is the cost price without any profit margin," the manager emphasized. (Al Dusour).

THE GENERAL assembly of the Agricultural Materials Trade Association decided to reject a decision of the minister of agriculture to fix the prices of agricultural materials and to follow up the matter with the prime minister in cooperation with the Agricultural Engineers Association and other concerned parties. The general assembly also decided to stop extending credit facilities to retailers and farmers and be satisfied with only cash sales.

In addition, the general assembly threatened to launch a general strike if any agricultural trader was fined upon refusing to abide by the ministry's decision. According to the head of the association, a meeting with the minister of agriculture has failed to resolve the dispute as the minister insisted on the decision backdated to Feb. 1, 1995. (Al Aswad).

PROJECTED self-revenues of independent government institutions for 1995 are estimated at JD 332 million, some JD 52 million higher than the 1994 figure. The treasury provides about JD 51 million in financial support to a few institutions such as the National Aid Fund, the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs and the Vocational Training Corporation (JD 33 million) and JD 18 million in development projects for the Water Authority and the Urban Development Corporation.

Projected expenditures for the 20 independent government institutions are estimated at JD 500 million of which JD 276 million are current spending and the rest are capital spending. As such the overall deficit for this year exceeds JD 107 million with the Water Authority alone accounting for JD 7 million of the deficit (Al Ra'i).

THE STANDARD and Specifications Corporation has completed a directory that includes 981 Jordanian standards and specifications (Al Ra'i).

Abu Dhabi approves key petrochemical, refining projects

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The Gulf emirate of Abu Dhabi has approved multi-billion-dollar projects to set up its first petrochemical complex and double the output of its main refinery, an official report said.

The Supreme Petroleum Council (SPC), which runs the emirate's huge energy sector, endorsed the plans involving an investment of nearly \$3 billion for the projects, the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) said.

The SPC directed that ADNOC proceeds immediately with the front end engineering design of the Ruwais refinery expansion and upgrading master plan," ADNOC said.

It is agreed that ADNOC continues to diversify its manufacturing product lines by building a petrochemical complex at Ruwais. The complex will utilise existing gases to produce valuable polyethylene products that can also be used as feedstock for the development of the downstream industries.

The bulletin said both petrochemical and refining projects would be completed before the year 2000 and were part of overall plans to expand the United Arab Emirates (UAE) energy sector to face growing world demand.

Industry sources said the petrochemical complex at Ruwais, nearly 200 kilometres north of Abu Dhabi, would cost nearly \$1.5 billion and produce around 300,000 tonnes of polyethylene per year.

It would be fully owned by ADNOC, of which 60 per cent is controlled by the Abu Dhabi government and the rest by Japanese, British and French oil firms.

The complex will be the UAE's first petrochemical project as it produces only fertilizers, including around 500,000 tonnes of urea and 330,000 tonnes of ammonia per year. Most of the fertilizers are exported to China.

Industry sources said the petrochemical plans were designed to tap the UAE's enormous gas reserves, estimated at nearly 5.7 trillion cubic metres, the fourth largest natural gas reserves in the world after those of Russia, Iran and Qatar.

The plans coincide with expectations of a large increase in Gulf petrochemical exports following last year's

historic deal by the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, which will open new markets for such products.

Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil producer and exporter, Kuwait and Qatar are the main petrochemical producers in the Arab World, with their output exceeding half the total Arab production of around 13.5 million tonnes per year, according to official Arab estimates.

ADNOC said the refining expansion would nearly double Ruwais' production of around 140,000 barrels per day (b/d), bringing the total refining output to nearly 350,000 b/d, or six per cent of the combined Arab refining production.

The UAE's other refinery at Umm Al Nar has already been expanded to 72,000 b/d from 60,000 b/d at a cost of \$80 million. Official sources put the cost of the Kuwaiti expansion project at around \$1.5 billion.

"The project will increase the refined products export potential of Abu Dhabi and contribute substantially to technology development," ADNOC said.

"The facilities envisaged include a 135,000 b/d crude distillation unit, a 200,000 b/d condensate distillation unit, a 46,000 b/d hydrocracker and necessary downstream processing, storage, handling and loading facilities," it explained.

Holiday dampens AFM trading

By a Jordan Times
Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Trading remained low and prices dipped a little at the Amman Financial Market (AFM) last week as investors took their own time to do serious business after the long 'Eid Al Fitr holiday, brokers said Friday.

The weekly report of the market said volume of trading in three days of business beginning Monday was JD 2.8 million compared with JD 16.2 million in five days of business in the previous week. Trading is done Saturday to Wednesday, with Thursday set aside for accounting.

The report said 1.3 million shares changed hands under 2,207 deals during the week.

Stocks of 71 companies were involved in the trading, and as business closed only eight of them showed gains; 63 posted drops and 10 remained stable.

The official AFM share price index based on 60 major companies closed at 142.6 points, down 1.3 points or 0.9 per cent from the week's opening of 143.9 points.

The separate sector indices showed that services sector shares lost 2.6 points or 1.9 per cent, industrials 1.3 points or one per cent, commercial banks 1.1 points or 0.7 per cent and insurance companies 0.1 point or 0.1 per cent.

Industrials accounted for

JD 1.31 million, or 46.9 per cent of the weekly volume, followed by banks with JD 780,000 (27.9 per cent), the services sector with JD 670,000 (24 per cent) and insurance stock with JD 33,000 (1.2 per cent).

"Depositors now get around nine per cent on short-term, three months or six months, deposits, and many (AFM) investors are turning to take advantage of this offer," said a broker, who, like other AFM dealers, cannot be identified by name under standing market guidelines.

"The result is a crunch on liquidity in the market," said the broker, noting also that many speculators who depend on commercial bank credits for their operations in the market were also having second thoughts, given the parallel rise in the interest rate they have to pay the banks.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET HOUSING BANK CENTER - AMMAN - SIEGRANI TELEPHONE: 66170 / 663170					
ORGANIZED MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (04/03/1995 - 08/03/1995)					
WEEKLY REPORT					
COMPANY'S NAME	TRADING VOLUME JD	PREV. CLOSING PRICE JD	OPENING PRICE JD	CLOSING PRICE JD	CHANGE
ARAB BANK PIC	33,410	188.750	188.750	188.500	-0.250
ARAB NATIONAL BANK	119,012	4.550	4.530	4.520	-0.030
ARAB NATIONAL BANK / NEW	193,000	4.370	4.370	4.330	-0.040
CAIRO AMMAN BANK	44,910	4.750	4.750	4.990	+0.240
CARDIFF BANK	1,136	3.600	3.600	3.500	-0.100
MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK	38,348	1.520	1.520	1.490	-0.030
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	7,600	3.780	3.780	3.720	-0.060
TEK HOUSING BANK	44,055	6.120	6.120	6.090	-0.030
JORDAN KUWAITI BANK	58,103	3.000	3.000	3.000	0.000
JORDAN CULY BANK	7,479	1.270	1.270	1.330	+0.060
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	78,436	3.910	3.910	3.810	-0.100
BUSINESS BANK	1,225	3.500	3.500	3.500	0.000
BEST ISHL SAVINGS/INVESTMENT	6,252	3.100	3.100	3.120	+0.020
AMMAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	123,187	1.390	1.390	1.360	-0.030
ARAB BANKING CORPORATION JORDAN	3,663	4.190	4.190	4.070	-0.120
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	25,616	1.440	1.440	1.430	-0.010
BANKS SECTOR					
	776397	INDEX NUMBER: 160.36			
	CHANGE	+ 0.71%			
JORDAN FIRE INSURANCE	23,777	3.520	3.520	2.500	-0.020
JOH LYND INSURANCE	1,198	2.550	2.550	2.550	0.000
ARAB LIFE & ACCIDENT INSURANCE	7,245	3.600	3.600	2.600	-0.000
DELTA INSURANCE	1,393	1.960	1.960	1.810	-0.150
INSURANCE SECTOR					
	32512	INDEX NUMBER: 116.89			
	CHANGE	+ 0.09%			
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	42,892	1.600	1.600	1.570	-0.030
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER /NEW	238,377	1.530	1.530	1.510	-0.020
JORDAN SIEBEL MINERAL	3,239	2.900	2.900	2.900	0.000
VEHICLES OWNERS FEDERATION	1,132	6.750	6.750	6.750	0.000
ARAB INTERNATIONAL HOTELS	33,703	4.900	4.900	4.850	-0.050
JORDAN NATIONAL SHIPPING LINES	103,039	3.440	3.440	3.360	-0.080
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	11,455	2.350	2.350	2.150	-0.200
REAL STATE INVESTMENT	9,318	1.200	1.200	1.130	-0.070
MACHINERY EQUIP., REPAIRING & MAINTENANCE	4,140	0.730	0.730	0.650	-0.080
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & CONDUOR HOTELS	63,725	2.370	2.370	2.350	-0.020
ARAB INTER. FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	10,626	3.600	3.600	3.540	-0.060
SERVICES SECTOR					
	517814	INDEX NUMBER: 130.91			
	CHANGE	+ 1.93%			
JORDAN TOBACCO & CIGARETTES	32,388	33.900	33.900	33.500	-0.400
ARMED FORCES COMIT. / MATERIAL MANUFACTURING	370	1.250	1.250	1.200	-0.050
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	109,988	3.020	3.020	2.990	-0.030
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY	13,621	9.430	9.430	9.440	+0.010
THE INDUSTRIAL COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL	4,861	3.900	3.900	3.800	-0.100
GRAND TOTAL					
	305573				

JORDAN MARKET PLACE					
FOR RENT	A SECURE Hotel Sweifiyah	Cheers Cafe' Hamburgers + Pizzas ELITE CAFE' Sweifiyah	STUDIO HAIG Professional Quality in 1 Hour Service	MING-SHING Chinese Restaurant The Best Cooking, Best Service, Best Atmosphere in Amman Deir Ghbar - American Embassy Str. near Baytuna Housing Estate	"THEY" SAID at Turino HOTEL SWEIFIYAH "AUTHENTIC COMMENTS"
FOR SALE	TURINO Flat.O.TEL SECURITY HOTEL SWEIFIYAH	At Turino	Develop your colour film at our shop and get: JUMBO photo size 30% larger	Take away is available	Your restaurant is improving every time we attend it. Keep up the good job, for we much look forward for our next visit !
Commercial and residential.	For more details call: Abdoun Real Estate Tel. 610005/610006 610520 Fax: 610529	TEL: 6/819676 FAX: 6/819676 ABDOUN WE HAVE NO OTHER BRANCHES	Shmeisani 611174 Tel: 611174 Once Tasted Always Loved	Shmeisani Opp. Grindlays Bank. Phone: 604042 Sweifiyah tel: 523891	Turino Restaurant Sweifiyah - 863944

Asian U-18 Basketball Championship

Jordan loses to South Korea; plays Thailand for 3rd place today

Alkhas chosen tournament's best defensive player

By Omar Bashtawi in Manila and Aileen Bannayan in Amman

ALTHOUGH South Korea Friday dashed Jordan's hope of reaching the Asian basketball final with a 69-51 win in the semifinals Friday, the Kingdom's under-18 national team still has a chance to make history when they play Thailand for third place today.

A win over Thailand will qualify Jordan, along with the top two teams, to the world championship which will be held later this year in Greece.

Titeholders China are on course for their fifth Asian title. They advanced to the final after eliminating Thailand 98-45.

Meanwhile, Jordan's Zeid Alkhas, who scored 25 points Friday, was chosen the tournament's top defensive player and was named in the Asian junior "dream team." He received a \$500 bonus.

Friday was not the Jordanian team's day however.

The players were clearly exhausted and the South Koreans were not an easy team to beat. They had defeated Jordan 75-61 in the first round.

The Kingdom's players effectively limited their opponents' scoring ability in the first half when Korea won 28-27. However, the Jordanian team lacked defensive capability in the second half and the whole

burden of scoring fell on team captain Zeid Alkhas, while the team's usual other top scorer Ma'an Odeh was held to only four points and Ashraf Samara to eight.

In a post-match statement head coach Murad Barakat attributed the loss to exhaustion and bad luck:

"This was their seventh game in eight days. The players lacked concentration and were unlucky in shooting from the three point range. Still it was a good game and we played an excellent first half."

Jordan Basketball Federation (JBF) Deputy Chairman Samir Janakat praised the newly regrouped team playing their first international tourna-

ment. "Our players found themselves playing the top Asian teams who have a lot more experience. No one can underestimate titeholders China or runners up South Korea. It is still a big achievement for us," he said.

The only Arab team in the 15-nation competition, the Jordanian team scored impressive results in the championship which concludes today. In the first first round, they beat Hong Kong 71-24 and Singapore 88-35. In the quarterfinals round, they scored a spectacular 72-71 win over hosts the Philippines before losing to China 88-49. They beat Japan 73-56 to move to the semifinals.

Al Faisali lose to Al Ahli in opening match

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan's Al Faisali lost 1-0 to Egyptian champions Al Ahli in the opening match of the 5th Arab Cup Winners' Championship which kicked off in Cairo Friday.

Al Faisali are grouped with Al Ahli, Qatar's Al Arabi,

and Al Mastaqbal of Tunis in Group A. Group B includes titeholders Olympic of Morocco, Al Shahab of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait's Al Qadissiah and Rafah of Palestine.

Al Faisali will now have to win both their upcoming matches to move to the semifinals of the competition.

Spurs beat Cavs on last-second inbounds play

CLEVELAND (R) — For the San Antonio Spurs, it was last-second perfection, but for the Cleveland Cavaliers, it was a mental lapse that caused them to come up short — literally.

Sean Elliott's layup off an inbounds pass from Doc Rivers with one second left lifted the Spurs to a 100-98 victory over the Cavaliers on Thursday.

After the Cleveland's Ter-

rell Brandon missed a 15-footer, the Spurs grabbed the rebound and called timeout with one second to go. San Antonio moved to midcourt for the inbounds pass and Rivers found Elliott under the basket for the game-winner.

"The play couldn't have worked more perfectly," said San Antonio coach Bob Hill.

"Doc Rivers made a great pass."

David Robinson scored nine of his 26 points in the final 3:20 as the Spurs, the hottest team in the NBA, won for the ninth time in their last 10 games.

Terrell Brandon scored 24 points and Tony Campbell added 21 for Cleveland, which has lost five of its last six games.

Cleveland used a 16-4 burst to erase a six-point deficit and take a 94-88 lead when Dany Ferry hit a 3-pointer with 4:11 to play. The Spurs countered with an 8-2 run to tie the game at 96-96 as Robinson scored seven

points.

"I'm sorry for the team," said Cleveland coach Mike Fratello. "They worked very hard against an outstanding club and came up a little bit short."

In Charlotte, Alonzo Mourning scored 13 of his 35 points in the fourth quarter to lift the Hornets to their fourth win in five games, a 112-99 triumph over the Seattle Supersonics.

Mourning connected on 12-of-20 from the field, hauled in 13 rebounds and blocked six shots as the Hornets won their fourth in a row at home.

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No baseball 'Team Dream' in '96

ATLANTA (AP) — Assembling a baseball "Dream Team" among U.S. professionals is hopeless for the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, it could become reality by the 2000 Sydney Games, U.S. Olympic coach skip Bertman said.

"It looks like a dead deal for 1996," said Bertman. "But some time in the future, it's likely to happen."

The idea would allow top U.S. Latin American players to represent their homelands, with U.S. hackers hopeful of duplicating the "Dream Team" gold medal performance in baseball from the 1992 Barcelona Games.

"It's totally false," he told regional daily El Periodico. "It is a malevolent campaign. I will not stand for people attacking Jordi in order to get at me."

"If things continue like this, I'll have to reconsider my position," he added.

"I've always said that if I'm not wanted, it'll be no problem for me to leave. I might even leave before I'm asked to."

Jordi, a talented striker, made a promising start to the season but has since lost his form. In recent matches, he has been whistled off by the pitch by Barcelona fans.

His father has brought Bar-

celona immense success on

the pitch — consecutive

league titles 1991-94, plus the

European Cup and Super

Cup in 1992 — but has been

Cruyff threatens to quit Barcelona

PARIS (AFP) — Barcelona coach Johan Cruyff is threatening to quit because of a campaign he claims is being waged against his son Jordi.

The Dutchman, who has taken the Catalan club to the top in European football, is upset over recent stories about the 20-year-old son who he promoted to Barcelona's first team this season.

In one article, local daily Avui claimed Cruyff was demanding a contract worth around 100 million pesetas (\$80,000) a year for Jordi.

"It's totally false," he told regional daily El Periodico.

"It is a malevolent campaign.

"I will not stand for people attacking Jordi in order to get at me."

"If things continue like this, I'll have to reconsider my position," he added.

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Cup in 1992 — but has been

criticised for an autocratic

style.

However, his thoughts of

departure prompted a crisis

meeting between the Dutch

man and club vice-president,

Joan Gaspart.

Cruyff's men will have to

put the controversy behind

them on Saturday when they

face Atletico Madrid, the

team who knocked them out

of this season's Spanish Cup.

More importantly, they

must be prepared psychologically

for their European Cup,

quarter-final second leg

against Paris St. Germain

Wednesday.

League leaders Real Mad-

rid travel to Racing Santan-

der.

Italian football will be hop-

ing that the weekend passes

off without incident, after

another spate of stabbings

hroke out in midweek.

Four navy conscripts were

on their way to Wednesday's

Italian Cup semifinal be-

tween Lazio and Juventus

when they were attacked by a

knife-wielding gang.

The sailors were not seriously

hurt, police said, although

one received deep wounds.

The incident followed the

stabbing to death on January

29 of a young Geoa supporter, Vincenzo Spagnolo, be-

fore Genoa's league match against AC Milan. The match was abandoned at half-time and a week later all Italian sports fixtures were called off for one day.

Series A leaders Juventus are home to Foggia on Sunday, while second placed Parma have a trickier task when they host Sampdoria.

Third-placed Lazio, who crushed Fiorentina 8-2 last weekend, travel to Napoli.

The race for the Bundesliga title has meanwhile been thrown open by Borussia

Dortmund's first league de-

feat for six months.

Beaten 1-0 by FC Kaiserslautern, Dortmund are at home to Eintracht Frankfurt on Saturday with only a two-point cushion over Werder Bremen, who play Freiburg on Friday.

In France, second-placed Paris St. Germain are giving the weekend fixtures a miss, in order

Barcelona

Celtics to sue Wall Street Journal over Reggie Lewis story

BOSTON (R) — The Boston Celtics said Thursday it will file \$100 million lawsuit against the Wall Street Journal for a story which said the National Basketball Association team ignored suspected cocaine use by former team captain Reggie Lewis, who died of heart failure in 1993.

Celtics chairman Paul Gaston blasted the article, which appeared in Thursday's Wall Street Journal, calling the charges "ridiculous, shameful and disgusting."

Gaston said he was "shocked, appalled and outraged" by the story, which said that financial and public relations interests and the payment of a \$15 million life insurance policy kept the team from giving Lewis proper care after he collapsed during a playoff game April 29, 1993.

"It's not my nature to be litigious, however I can not sit here and let a national and international publication defame Reggie and the Celtics to the extent that has happened today," Gaston told a news conference.

"We intend to sue the reporter, Ron Suskind, the Wall Street Journal and its parent Dow Jones Co. Inc for \$100 million."

In the article, Suskind wrote: "What is evident is the official cause of death, a heart damaged by the common cold virus, is a medically non-sensical finding by a coroner who was under intense pressure from the Lewis family to exclude any implication of drug use."

More than \$15 million in insurance coverage of Lewis' contract reportedly would be paid out only if no drugs were involved in his death, the journal reported.

"Any allegation or insinuation that economic or monetary concerns could have conceivably played a role in any care that Reggie Lewis got are absolutely ridiculous. They're worse than ludicrous, they're shameful and

disgusting," Gaston said.

Lewis' widow, Donna Harris-Lewis, called the Wall Street Journal story "totally irresponsible."

"He was a model citizen," Harris-Lewis said of her late husband. "This is how I shall remember him. Reggie did not use drugs. I repeat, Reggie did not use drugs."

After Lewis collapsed during the playoff game, doctors found three black patches on his heart, which they felt could only be caused by arteriosclerosis — mostly found in older patients — viruses, a previous heart attack or cocaine use, the article said.

Tests narrowed the possible causes down and raised suspicions about drug use, but Lewis denied taking cocaine and the team never tested him for the drug.

The article suggested that while the NBA boasts it will expel any player found using drugs, it was more concerned with avoiding a scandal than in testing for suspected drug use by its star players.

The league took exception to the article and also issued a statement of condemnation.

"It's obvious to any reader that this article is based entirely on speculation and has no real factual basis," NBA deputy commissioner Russ Granik said.

"Furthermore, there is no conceivable way that the NBA's anti-drug programme had anything to do with the issue of whether Reggie Lewis was tested or could have been tested upon his admission to the hospital."

Gaston said any proceeds from the lawsuit would be donated to a memorial established for the late star, whose number 35 will be retired by the team in a ceremony later this month.

Lewis died on July 27, 1993 at the age of 27 after collapsing while shooting baskets with friends at Brandeis University.

Pesaro, Bologna in control

ROME (R) — Italian sides Pesaro and Bologna relied on foreign talent for wins over Limoges and Panathinaikos in their European Champion Clubs' Basketball quarter-final, first legs on Thursday.

American Corey Gaines and Dean Garrett led Pesaro to a convincing 68-55 win over their French opponents while Serb Predrag Danilovic scored 24 points to power Bologna to an 85-68 success over the Greeks.

After an exciting first half that finished 26-26 in Pesaro, sharp playmaker Gaines, who had a team-best 17 points, spurred a second-half scoring spree which stunned ex-champions Limoges and sent the partisan crowd into a frenzy.

It culminated in an amazing fall-away three-pointer from the free corner by veteran Italian forward Antonello Riva from his first shot of the game.

Forward Michael Young scored a game-high 28 points for the French.

In Bologna, Danilovic showed why he may end up in the NBA, leading the Italians with 17 points in the first half and five assists after the interval.

'Michael Jordan to return to NBA'

CHICAGO (Agencies) — Michael Jordan, estranged from the sport he adopted, is returning to the game he once ruled, a source told the Associated Press on Thursday night.

"He's done with baseball," said the source, speaking on the condition he not be identified. "He's going to play basketball."

Jordan practiced again with the Chicago Bulls Thursday, the third straight day he appeared at team headquarters and will shortly trade in his baseball spikes for a new pair of Air Jordan basketball shoes.

"It won't be tonight, tomorrow or the next day," the source said. "But it will be soon...he's going to take couple of weeks to tune up."

Jordan retired suddenly about a month before the 1993-94 season. Though he has stayed in shape playing baseball, he "wants to make sure he's near the top of his game," the source said.

The ESPN cable television network also reported Thursday night that Jordan is returning. The network, citing a "reliable" but unidentified source, said he will come back, but not for a couple of weeks. ESPN said Jordan is intent on being in good shape and wants to discuss the future of the Bulls with team management.

It was unclear how Jordan would fit under the Bulls' salary cap. He has two years remaining on a contract reportedly paying him \$4 million.

"He won't rush back to improve the (team's) playoff position," the source told the AP. "It doesn't matter to him as much whether they play the No. 1 or 2 seed as whether he's in real good shape."

Niyongabo, winner of the dream mile in Oslo last year, was scheduled to run the 3,000 m after being interrogated by immigration officials for three hours on arrival decided to fly back to his training base in Italy.

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Jackson, 32, led the Bulls to NBA titles in 1991, 1992 and



Michael Jordan warms up before a training workout with the Chicago White Sox earlier this month (AP photo)

1993. He then shocked the sports world on Oct. 6, 1993, retiring with a 32-3-point scoring average, the best in league history. Jordan said he had "reached the pinnacle," had nothing left to prove and just wanted to "watch the grass grow."

Rather than kicking back,

however, Jordan provided

another surprise a few months later when he announced he'd try to play baseball with the White Sox, who are owned by Bulls owner Jerry Reinsdorf.

Jordan, who hadn't played baseball since high school,

batted a low .202 at the

double-a Birmingham Minor League team last season. He went to spring training hoping to move up to triple-A Nashville this season, but the major league players' strike left him in limbo and he returned to Chicago.

Jordan, whose number 23

has been retired and who has been honoured by a statue outside the new United Centre, was the first player on the court Thursday morning. He shot baskets with Toni Kukoc before the rest of the Bulls joined in. Jordan was wearing a white sleeveless Bulls T-shirt, a pair of red shorts and white Nikes.

ing much attention, showed up Tuesday and watched films with Jackson and the other coaches.

Jordan then worked out with the team Wednesday and Thursday.

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Privalova aims for record at first 400 attempt

BARCELONA (R) — Irina Privalova, Europe's top woman sprinter, will attempt the world indoor 400 metres record this weekend in her first competitive outing over the exacting two-lap event.

The 26-year-old Russian, who broke the world 50 metres indoor record last month en route to equaling her own 60 metres world mark, confessed on Thursday it had not been her decision to step into unknown territory at the fifth World Indoor Championships which started on Friday.

"It was not my decision," Privalova explained at a news conference. "My coach said I have won the 60 metres and the 200 metres (at world indoor championships).

"It would be interesting to become the first person to win all three. It will be the first time I have run over 400 metres. I will be running to break the world record."

The present mark of 49.59 seconds was set by Czech Jarmila Kratochvilova 13 years ago.

Privalova will be compet-

ing against world outdoor champion Jeani Miles, the only Olympic or world champion included in an under-strength U.S. team.

The American squad, which does not include Michael Johnson who has broken the world indoor 400 record twice this year, was further weakened this week when 1991 world outdoor 400 champion Antonio Pettigrew withdrew.

But it includes exciting hurdler Allen Johnson, who ended the 44-race winning streak of Britain's world high hurdles champion and record-holder Colin Jackson last month.

Johnson, 24, a quietly-spoken sociology student who sports a gold ear-ring in his left ear and a gold stud in his right, said on Thursday beating Jackson had given him a lot of confidence.

"It was something that showed me I can run against anybody and win against anybody," Johnson said.

Jackson is one of a number of top competitors who have decided not to run here and

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Stojko keeps figure skating crown

BIRMINGHAM (R) — Canadian Elvis Stojko retained his figure skating title Thursday night, after a sparkling performance in the free programme.

Stojko, the Olympic silver medalist at Lillehammer, had been trailing American Tod Eldredge after the short programme but overtook his rival in a thrilling climax to the event.

Eldredge took the silver and Frenchman Philippe Candeloro, who had been struggling in fifth place, the bronze.

It was fairytale ending for the Canadian, who tore an ankle ligament seven weeks ago but was determined to defend his crown, however, painful that might be.

Even 10 days ago, he refused to try out the more complicated parts of his routine, for fear of injury.

Undaunted on the night, he even attempted a quadruple jump, which did not come off, as he skated to victory in the free programme — to roars of approval from the British crowd.

But perfect eight triple jumps is an exceptional performance — ensured that he leapt over Eldredge into the gold medal position.



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UNRWA satisfied with results of Amman talks

By Cathy King
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) concluded a two-day informal meeting of major donors and host governments here Thursday with a consensus on crucial questions regarding the agency's future and pledges of financial support from several donor countries, UNRWA officials said.

"The meeting went very well and we are pleased with the outcome," UNRWA's Commissioner-General Ifer Turkmen told a press conference Thursday evening. "The (meeting's) purpose was not to elicit exact donations; rather the purpose was to propose our 'five-year planning horizon' to donor countries" and to gain a convergence of opinion in questions specific to the prospective of UNRWA, he said.

The five-year formula is aligned with the schedule delineated in the declaration of principles (DnP) that was signed by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israel on Sept. 13, 1993.

The meeting here was the first to be held in Jordan after the signing of the DnP.

The DnP calls for five years of Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Negotiations on the final status of the territories is to begin not later than the third year of self-rule.

The Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho

went under Palestinian autonomy in May 1994. Israel and the PLO are negotiating the expansion of self-rule to the rest of the West Bank.

With the setting up of a Palestinian self-rule authority in the Gaza Strip, the PLO also called for and secured U.N. agreement to moving the UNRWA headquarters to the Mediterranean strip from Vienna, Austria.

UNRWA, set up in 1950, provides education, health and social services to Palestinian refugees scattered in camps in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip as well as Jordan, Syria and Lebanon.

With the signing of the Israel-PLO autonomy accord, the U.N. agency also undertook to implement programmes financed by the international community which has made pledges of \$2.4 billion to help the Palestinians for five years starting 1994. These projects are classified under a so-called Peace Implementation Programme (PIP).

A statement made available to the Jordan Times after the Wednesday/Thursday meeting in Amman said that delegates from donor countries and host governments "felt the need to reassure the refugee community, the host governments and UNRWA staff of their continuing support to the agency until an agreed solution to the problems of refugees is found."

It added that delegates also commended UNRWA's five-year plan as an "innovative

and sound framework for planning the agency's activities in the coming period."

In the course of the meeting, the agency presented to donors and host governments its plan which included projected expenditures during those five years. Having highlighted priorities, the agency proposed the financial requirements for its objectives.

"Participants in the meeting endorsed the five-year plan... and have taken notice of it as a basis for expenditure," said Mr. Turkmen, who emphasised the plan was "not linked to a five-year solution."

Mr. Turkmen said that the delegates recognised the importance of UNRWA to the stability of the region and that they affirmed the necessity for the agency to continue its education, health and social services at their present levels.

UNRWA sustained a budget deficit of \$12 million in 1994, and it was feared that if contributions fall short of the agency's expenditure again, then services would have to be dramatically reduced.

Mr. Turkmen told the Jordan Times on Wednesday that the agency had exhausted its operational reserves.

Mr. Turkmen said Thursday that delegates were "worried about (the agency's) budget deficit and feared it would be worse this

(Continued on page 7)

Algeria bomb wounds 33

ALGIERS (Agencies) — A car bomb exploded at dawn Friday in an Algiers police housing complex, wounding 33 people as they slept, following a warning from a radical Algerian Islamic group threatening to attack women linked to the security forces.

Timed at dawn on Friday when most Algerians are at home, the attack appeared to mark a new escalation in the fundamentalists' three-year campaign of terror to oust the military-backed government.

It was the first attack of its size against a so-called civilian target, housing women and children. Eight children were among the wounded.

"We wanted to get out, but there were flames in front of the building," the wife of a policeman said. Her baby daughter escaped with scratches.

The bomb blew up between two buildings on the Garidi estate for police officers and their families in the working-class suburb of Kankia, a fundamentalist stronghold.

It tore off the facade of a four-floor building, sending furniture flying, and was heard in the city centre three kilometres away, but authorities said the toll would have been far worse if the building

had collapsed.

Security forces initially reported 33 injured, and the figure was later confirmed by officials.

It was the second major car-bombing in six weeks in Algeria, which has been wracked by a three-year insurgency waged by Islamic militants seeking to topple the army-backed government.

On Jan. 30, a bomb-rigged car exploded outside Algiers' main police station, killing 42 people and wounding 286.

The hardline Armed Islamic Group claimed responsibility for that bombing and threatened further attacks by suicide bombers. It also has threatened to avenge the deaths of 96 prisoners, most of them Islamic militants, killed by security forces quelling a mutiny last month at Serkadj prison in Algiers.

In its latest threat, the Armed Islamic Group threatened Friday to kill the wives of police and army officers unless women detained for collaborating with the militants are freed.

The statement said the government, having failed to crush the group's fighters, were "seeking to take revenge on women of the believers... violating all values of virtue and forgetting that molesting the honour of a single Muslim woman is an unforgivable affront to all Muslims."

If the detained women were not released unconditionally, the group threatened to take revenge "by killing the wives of army and police tyrants and their assistants."

Duma fires head of human rights panel

MOSCOW (R) — The lower house of Russia's parliament on Friday dismissed human rights commissioner Sergei Kovalyov, a former Soviet dissident and fierce opponent of the Kremlin's bloody campaign to crush separatism in Chechnya.

The State Duma approved a resolution by 240 votes to 75 effectively removing Mr. Kovalyov from his post after conservative deputies accused him of bias and of overstepping his mandate.

"Sergei Kovalyov can have no responsibility for human rights. He wants to bring foreign troops in Russia," ultra-nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovsky, referring to Mr. Kovalyov's calls for international monitors to be sent to Chechnya.

Prominent hardliner Sergei Baturin, who led the attack on Mr. Kovalyov, said his "appeals to the entire world to put pressure on Russia cause us great sorrow."

A handful of liberals defended his action. "Kovalyov is more honest, noble and pure than anyone speaking here, myself included," said Vladimir Lukin, chairman of parliament's foreign affairs committee.

It was not immediately clear whether the vote deprived Mr. Kovalyov of all his duties.

He holds a similar position as head of a human rights commission appointed in 1993 by President Yeltsin. The president's office declined to comment on the

vote.

Mr. Kovalyov, 64, was convicted of anti-Soviet activity and spent seven years as a political prisoner in a Ural Mountains camp.

He was a close associate of human rights campaigner Andrei Sakharov and headed a human rights commission in the dying days of Soviet Russia's parliament at the beginning of the 1990s.

In Geneva, Italy, Mr. Kovalyov described his sacking as a personal vendetta by communists and ultra-nationalists.

He also told a conference on the post-cold war world in northwest Italy, where he learned of his dismissal, that he would continue to work in a similar position as head of a human rights commission appointed in 1993 by President Boris Yeltsin.

The chairman of the Duma's defence committee tendered his resignation on Friday in protest at the dismissal of Mr. Kovalyov, his aide said.

"He offered to resign but this decision has still to be approved by parliament," the aide to Sergei Yushenkov said. He added that Mr. Yushenkov remained committee chairman.

Meanwhile a delegation of top European foreign ministers held talks with President Yeltsin on Thursday, three days after the European Union held up a trade deal with Moscow because of the war in Chechnya.

He holds a similar position as head of a human rights commission appointed in 1993 by President Yeltsin. The president's office declined to comment on the

Talibans, Shiites clash

KABUL (AFP) — Tank and infantry fights broke out between gunmen of the Afghan militant Taliban movement and a Shiite faction based in southwest Kabul Friday, according to Defence Ministry sources.

The Talibans started fighting with the Shiites around the old Russian embassy and Darulaman Palace, a Defence Ministry source told AFP.

He said the fighting started after the Shiite Hezb-e-Wahdat faction refused to surrender their heavy weapons as demanded by the Talibans.

"The Talibans are trying to disarm Wahdat now," said the defence ministry source.

The Talibans entered the Shiite-controlled southwest of Kabul at the invitation of Hezb-e-Wahdat Wednesday afternoon apparently on the understanding that they would be taking over Shiite frontlines and heavy weapons.

However, it appeared that Hezb-e-Wahdat commanders wanted to use the Talibans to bolster their frontline defences in the five-day fighting with forces loyal to Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani.

"Wahdat hoped to use the Talibans as a way out of their imminent defeat by our forces," claimed the Defence Ministry informant.

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VINTAGE POSTERS: A Christie's auctioneer takes bids for a poster advertising the Humphrey Bogart movie 'The African Queen' during a sale of vintage film posters in London on Thursday.



Thursday. The poster, one of many from the Met Torme collection, fetched about \$925 (AFP wire photo)

COLUMN

Marriage in France hit 100-year low

PARIS (AFP) — The number of weddings in France, in decline over the past 20 years, has sunk to the lowest level this century, official statistics showed Friday. A study published by the national statistics institute INSEE said that in 1993 a total 255,200 French couples got married, a 6 per cent drop on the previous year. INSEE added that according to provisional figures for 1994, the number was expected to stabilise at around 254,000. The dip in the number of weddings began in 1973 and did remorselessly until 1987. After more French couples wed in 1988, the downwards trend resumed in 1991. The report also noted that the average age of people marrying for the first time was continuing to rise: 29 for men and 27 for women.

China plans Hong Kong epic film for 1997

HONG KONG (AFP) — China is planning an epic film about the 19th century Sino-British Opium War which led to Hong Kong becoming a British colony, a prominent Shanghai director has said. Xie Jin said his Hengqin Film and Video Co. would have the film released in Hong Kong and overseas in time to mark Hong Kong's return to Chinese sovereignty in July 1997, according to local press reports Friday.

Proposals and scripts have already been submitted to the central government in Beijing, and Xie said he has received "enthusiastic" support.

The international community could risk seeing the peace process collapsing if they do not pay," Foreign Minister Qian Qichen told Reuters in an interview.

On Friday he sent reminders to eight countries which had failed to come up with \$33.1 million, or 28 per cent, of the \$115 million pledged to the World Bank's "Holst Peace Fund" in the current budget period which expires on April 1.

Mr. Godal declined to name these countries but World Bank sources earlier this month said Canada and some European and Middle Eastern countries had not met their obligations.

Norway urges donors to pay for Mideast peace

OSLO (R) — Norway, which chairs an international consortium for aid to the Palestinian self-rule areas, on Friday sent rich donor countries an urgent reminder to pay up or risk undermining the Middle East peace process.

The "Holst Peace Fund," set up to help the Palestinians pay for the day-to-day costs of self-rule in Gaza and West Bank, is empty.

Oslo has no means to force donor countries to meet their obligations and can only appeal to their conscience.

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"We will not expose them

NEWS IN BRIEF

Saudis allow Jordanians to bring families

RIYADH (AP) — Saudi Arabia has lifted a ban on Jordanian and Palestinian workers bringing in their families that dates back to the 1990-1991 Gulf crisis, informed sources here said Friday. They said that Jordanians and Palestinians employed in the kingdom would from Saturday be allowed to bring in their wives and children. After the August 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait that led to the Gulf war, Saudi authorities banned visas for their families. The Jordanian and Palestinian communities, most of whom live in Riyadh or the Red Sea city of Jeddah, number around 400,000 people.

Pioneer of Israeli-PLO contacts dies

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israeli reserve general Matti Peled, a pioneer of early contacts with the Palestinians and former left wing deputy, died Friday at the age of 72, his family said. President Ezer Weizman paid tribute in a "combatant in all Israel's wars since the creation of the state in 1948." Peled was one of the military chiefs of staff during the 1967 Middle East war. Entering civilian life, he devoted himself to promoting peace from a left-wing stance. In 1975, he set up the Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace and became one of the first Israelis to meet Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat. He won a seat in parliament in 1984 on a pro-peace list alongside Arafat Mohammad Miari. Peled was a strong critic of Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and supported the creation of an independent Palestinian state.

Sudan rejects U.N. condemnation

KHARTOUM (R) — Sudan has rejected a United Nations Human Rights Commission resolution condemning it for abuses including torture, summary executions and slavery. Sudan's Minister of Justice Abdul Aziz Shido described the resolution as illogical, the official press reported Friday. He said the resolution repeats charges made in earlier resolutions which do not reflect the reality in Sudan. In one of the fiercest censure resolutions it has ever made, the commission in Geneva on Wednesday expressed "deep concern at continued serious human rights violations in Sudan..." Mr. Shido, who is also the country's attorney general, was quoted by the government-owned Al Sudan Al Hadith newspaper as saying that the resolution is an attempt to create instability in Sudan.

Netanyahu maintains poll lead over Rabin

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin would be beaten by right-wing leader Benjamin Netanyahu if elections were held today, according to opinion polls published Friday. Mr. Netanyahu of the Likud party garnered 42 per cent support against 36 per cent for the Labour Party chief in a Dafit institute survey for the Yedioth Ahronot newspaper. Ten per cent voiced no opinion and 12 per cent said they would abstain. General elections are due by November 1996. Dafit interviewed 503 Israelis on Tuesday amid allegations that senior Labour ministers set up a multi-million dollar election slush fund with trade union funds. The institute's last poll the previous week gave Mr. Netanyahu 44 per cent over 35 per cent for the 73-year-old prime minister.

Creator of Gali and Uzi guns dies

TEL AVIV (AP) — Yisrael Galili, the man who invented the Galil submachine gun and assisted with the creation of Israel's famed Uzi submachine gun, died Thursday after suffering a heart attack, Israel Television reported. Galili, a resident of the Tel Aviv suburb Givatayim, collapsed while waiting in line for a checkup at a local medical clinic, the television report said. Known in the military by the nickname "father of the rifle," Galili worked for 44 years in Israeli military industries and was considered an expert in developing light weapons, the Israeli news agency Itim reported. In 1973 Galili received Israel's security prize for creating the Galil, named for him, Itim said. He also assisted Israeli Uzi Gal with the creation of the Uzi submachine gun, which has become a mainstay of secret services.

Israeli deputies to look for war dead

TEL AVIV (AP) — A delegation of Israeli members of parliament will shortly visit Egypt to look for soldiers missing and killed in the 1973 war, officials said Friday. The delegation was invited by Egyptian parliaments. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has urged Jordan, Syria and Lebanon to allow similar missions to locate and return Israeli soldiers missing in action. The army could not provide the figures immediately.

Arafat cancels Copenhagen appearance

COPENHAGEN (AP) — Spokesman for the U.N. World Summit on Social Development here confirmed Friday that Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat will not attend the summit which closes Sunday. The Palestinian undersecretary of the social affairs ministry, Thiaq Ayayoush, also the head of the Palestinian delegation here, told AFP that Mr. Arafat will not attend the summit because of "the tough schedule" resulting from a breakthrough in the peace talks with Israel Thursday. A Palestinian official said earlier in Gaza that Mr. Arafat had sent his apologies to the summit.

Three Jewish settlers disarmed

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israeli police have withdrawn gun permits from three Jewish settlers who were caught on film shooting and wounding three Palestinian stone-throwers in Hebron. Police said the men from the West Bank settlement of Kiryat Arba had used their guns illegally in December 1993. Soldiers were also filmed standing by watching the settlers firing. A majority of men among the 130,000 West Bank settlers carrying guns say they fear for their lives.

Mandela to visit Kuwait, Gulf states

CAPE TOWN (AP) — South African President Nelson Mandela will visit Kuwait and some Gulf states from March 26 to April 2, his first visit as head of state to the Gulf region, his spokesman said Friday. Spokesman Parks Mank